

# Friday Times

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## Local

## Kuwait is NOT the worst place for expats



Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai

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The InterNations annual Expat Insider index for 2019 ranked Kuwait as the worst destination for expatriates for the second year in a row. The list saw Kuwait occupying the bottom spot after Italy, Nigeria, Brazil, Turkey, India, United Kingdom, Greece, Russia and South Korea. Actually, aside from Kuwait, I have lived in some of these countries as an Arab expat and those were the best times of my life, so I personally can't believe any of what the survey says no matter what criteria they used.

This organization placed Kuwait among the worst destinations for expatriates from 2014 to 2016. It was the second worst destination for expatriates in 2017 before going down to the bottom in 2018 and 2019. This article does not aim to argue if Kuwait is the worst location for expats to live or not, because clearly, the decision has already been made regardless of the causes. But I would like to raise a few points and hopefully those who are behind the survey will take these into account next year.

Now, I wonder how this conclusion was reached. The questionnaire asked participants to assess where they live based on several factors such as well-being, ease of adap-

tation, family life, work, financial matters, cost of living and others. Bahrain topped the list of the best Arab destinations for expatriates, ranking seventh in the world, while Taiwan was named the best destination for expats in 2019. The report did not mention the classification of Saudi Arabia. I wonder why.

According to the report, Kuwait ranked last in "ease of settling in" and "quality of life", with an improvement in the level of "personal finance". It was also placed last for "leisure options" and "personal happiness", and in the penultimate place on the index of "travel and mobility", while ranked as the third worst country in terms of "health and well-being".

The current population of Kuwait is around 4 million. Expatriates account for about 70 percent of Kuwait's population, including 1.1 million Arab expatriates and 1.4 million Asians. There are expats who have been living in Kuwait for more than 50 years, so I wonder if the survey took into account the residency years of expats living in Kuwait. I think they should, because surely those expats would not stay that long if Kuwait is the worst destination for expats!

Kuwait came third as the worst country in terms of "making friends", indicating Kuwaitis seem to be difficult "to make friends with expatriates residing in their country". I believe this statement is a false allegation. I don't know how this claim can be proved wrong, because Kuwaitis are known for their hospitality. Try to drop in at a Kuwait diwaniya and then make a decent judgment, but if this finding was made based on a visit to a government department,

then I would say yes, as I guess all government employees are alike in all countries around the world, especially if you don't speak their mother tongue.

I hope when the organization decides to issue its survey next year, it takes into account key points regarding the years each participant has been living in Kuwait and their source of income, and also specify logical reasons for hating Kuwait and why they haven't left Kuwait if it is really an awful place to live in!

According to InterNations, a total of 20,259 expatriates took part in the entire survey, representing 182 nationalities and living in 187 countries or territories. But how many expats from Kuwait took part? Are we talking 100 respondents? 1,000? The report doesn't say so. This ranking could be based on the opinions of as few as 10 random people who filled out the survey online. InterNations may have based its claim on a limited number of respondents and who is most likely to respond but those with a grievance?

I know that Kuwait is not an ideal place, but I can't think of any perfect land on earth nowadays. Kuwait offers safety and security and peaceful living for millions of people. Yes there are problems, like any country has. But there are also loads of benefits and I don't just mean a tax free salary. There are gorgeous and welcoming parks and the seaside. There are loads of community organizations and plenty of family-friendly activities. There is plenty of shopping and restaurants and travel opportunities. Kuwait is also metropolitan, home to many different nationalities.

Biased claims are not accepted. This is my view.

## Saved! Our history and the ice skating rink



IN MY VIEW

By Nawara Fattahova

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In April, reports about shutting down and demolishing the Ice Skating Rink spread in Kuwait. Officials didn't provide exact information on the expected date of the closure, and even the staff working at the rink were unsure about it. I felt sad, and thousands other fans of the rink were also despondent. So I tried to go skating as much as I could to exploit the remaining time to the maximum.

But this week I was very happy to hear about one of the best decisions made by a public institution to protect the Ice Skating Rink from being demolished. The National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) has decided to determine the Ice Skating Rink a national landmark that should be protected from demolition and should remain for the next generations, as this building has historical and cultural value.

So NCCAL registered the Ice Skating Rink in the national register of historic buildings (no. KHBR-11104-18). The council also sent an official letter to the Municipality on this issue, which included a report by specialists who evaluated the historical and cultural value of the rink. NCCAL also demanded the Municipality not to issue a demolition license for this building and refrain from any demolition procedures.

A proposal to expand Al Shaheed Park with a third phase was behind the plan to demolish the Ice Skating Rink, in addition to



the Dancing Fountain and Discovery Mall. I was wondering who could come up with such a terrible idea, as we don't need more parks. The current huge Al Shaheed Park that consists of two phases is more than enough for the people of Kuwait. Also, we don't need more places for children. Besides, Discovery Mall is also a place for kids to play and the Ice Skating Rink to practice a useful sport.

Young people in Kuwait are suffering from a lack of entertainment places. It started with shutting down Shaab Park with illogical excuses, followed by closing Entertainment City without having any alternative theme or leisure parks except those for small children.

The Ice Skating Rink was always one of Kuwait's symbols and a part of the childhood memory of everyone born in Kuwait in the 1970s and 1980s. This place was never replaced by competitors, even when Shaab Park opened in the early 1990s with a small ice rink. The rink is not just a place for fun, as skating is also a sport.

It is a great place that should not be demolished unless another ice skating rink is built of a similar or larger size.

The Ice Skating Rink opened in March 1980 over an area of 8,398 sq m, and was the first of its kind in the GCC region. It includes two rinks - an Olympic rink with 1,600 seats for the audience, and a smaller rink for women and children. There is also a cafeteria, restaurant and some booths, in addition to a shop for skating equipment and rentals.

Not only does the public enjoy skating at the Ice Skating Rink, it also serves professional ice hockey players of the Kuwait hockey team, who train there. Ice skating courses are also available for beginners. This place was never abandoned - it is always busy, even during weekdays. Besides skating, the rink is a venue for hosting popular musical concerts in Kuwait, especially the Hala February concerts. Tens of popular singers from all over the Arab world have participated in these concerts for over 20 years, and thousands of people have enjoyed attending them.



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PHOTO FEATURE

# Exploring Bait Al-Othman

**B**ait Al-Othman Museum located in Hawally is one of the most fascinating local museums in Kuwait. The museum's collection covers a wide array of Kuwait's history as well as other aspects of life. It was inaugurated in April 2013 and focused primarily on the history and culture of pre-oil Kuwait. There are military tanks and other vehicles, memorabilia from pre-oil days including movie posters, soda

bottles, documents, books, Kuwait Airways uniforms and much much more. Plan to spend a couple of hours exploring. The museum is open from 9am to 1pm and from 4pm to 9pm, Sunday through Thursday. Entrance is KD 1 per person.

— All photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat





# Local





## Local

# Kuwaiti experts caution e-cigs unsafe alternative to smoking

**KUWAIT:** Electronic cigarettes were used as a rather safe substitute to regular cigarettes - however, their danger rose to the surface with the US announcing six e-cigarette-related deaths recently. An e-cigarette is a handheld battery-powered vaporizer that simulates smoking through providing some of the behavioral aspects of smoking, without burning tobacco. Controversy over the safety of these vapes is still going on, as it is believed they have similar effects as regular cigarettes when used for a long term. These include cancer and heart attacks.

There is a concern in Kuwait over the growing numbers of people using e-cigarettes, especially teenagers. Although they are prohibited by the ministry of health, they are still illegally sold on social media and in stores. According to researchers, e-cigarettes are relatively new to the market and need further thorough studies to fully determine their dangers. They had found that long-term use could harm immunity cells in the body.

In separate statements to KUNA yesterday, a number of addiction specialists and anti-smoking centers agreed that e-cigarettes cannot be considered as a safe alternative to



Abdulhameed Al-Belali

smoking. Chairman of Bashayer Al-Khair Society Abdulhameed Al-Belali affirmed that e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is found in tobacco and causes addiction. He added that most people who get into drug addiction start by smoking tobacco. The aim behind inventing e-cigarettes was to avoid the deadly effects of cigarettes - however, companies started adding nicotine to attract more smokers, he noted.

Secretary General of the Gulf Anti-Smoking Committee Anwar Burahma noted that e-



Anwar Burahma

cigarettes appeared in 2004 and became popular in 2007. Claiming that these vapes are safe and can help a person quit smoking is untrue, he stressed. Smoking these for a long time causes addiction, while there is also a possibility that they could explode. In this matter, he mentioned recorded cases where e-cigarettes exploded and caused serious burns in the US. He called on the Cabinet, National Assembly and ministry of health to take serious measures to prevent people, espe-



Adel Mulla Hussein

cially youth, from using these cigarettes.

In the same context, head of Kuwait's national anti-smoking program Adel Mulla Hussein said that smokers of e-cigarettes often fail to quit smoking. He added that similar to regular cigarettes, electronic ones can affect arteries and cause strokes. The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently issued a warning to a top e-cigarettes manufacturing company, demanding it to stop advertising its products as a "safe alternative to regular smoking". — KUNA



KISR's exhibition "My day without plastic". — KUNA

## Annual plastic waste reaches 200,000 tons

**KUWAIT:** Director General of Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) Dr Samira Omar revealed yesterday that amount of plastic waste in Kuwait is estimated at 18 percent of total solid waste, about 200,000 tons annually. In a press statement on the sidelines of opening a special exhibition titled "My day without plastic", Omar said this amount of waste creates challenges that require effective, innovative and safe solutions.

Solutions include recycling of waste accord-

ing to carefully pre-planned methods to tackle millions of tons without causing harm to human health or the environment, she clarified. The exhibition aims at raising awareness of the dangers of plastic pollution, which negatively affects the environment, enhancing the environmental culture in the society and identifying harmful effects of some plastic materials. It included presentation of some scientific experiments. Moreover, participants distributed awareness publications using environmentally friendly materials.

The exhibition is part of a campaign also themed "My day without plastic" launched on Sept 9. It includes activities, workshops, lectures and the exhibition to raise awareness of the harmful effects of plastic waste. It is held at The Avenues mall in cooperation with the Kuwaiti diving team and volunteers from Box Hill College. — KUNA

## Need for full-scale scheme to tackle marine pollution

**KUWAIT:** An official at Kuwait's Environment Public Authority (EPA) yesterday affirmed the country's need for a full-scale national plan to cope with contamination of seawaters. Dr Abdullah Al-Zaidan, EPA's Deputy Director General for Technical Affairs, was speaking to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on the sidelines of a meeting that grouped the authority officials to discuss a projected scheme to deal with marine pollution.

Zaidan indicated that he and the other participants in the meeting, the second to be held at this level, examined a tentative "project" in this respect, launched last March. The planned "project" will be adopted in at least two years, he said, noting that efforts involved teams from the oil sector, namely Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), its subsidiary companies, the government sector such as the ministries of transport, electricity, water, interior, defense and Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD).

It has been "launched", he said, in line with EPA's keenness on playing its supervisory role in coordination with the other competent state bodies to ensure effective response to cases of marine pollution, in addition to implementing the law for protecting the environment (42/2014), along with its amendments, as well as overhauling mechanisms of dealing with and effectively responding to accidents that pollute the marine environment.

Zaidan adds the tasks performed within the planned project also involve the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine



Abdullah Al-Zaidan



Abdulmenem Al-Jenahi

Environment (ROPME). Abdulmenem Al-Jenahi, the director of mutual aid for marine emergency, affiliated with ROPME, called for updating an old plan for dealing with contamination in seawaters. — KUNA

# 1st



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## Local

# Kuwait Red Crescent Society opens water facilities project in Kenya

## Tunisia schools restored with Kuwaiti funding inaugurated

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) yesterday launched a project to restore water supply systems and wells in Garissa town in Kenya in cooperation with Kenya Red Cross. In a statement, KRCS' envoy to Kenya Dr Musaed Al-Enezi said the project aims at supporting more than 17,000 people in areas affected by the drought. Enezi, also director of the project's youth and volunteers department, added that this project is part of ongoing Kuwaiti humanitarian efforts to help those in need around the world.

As part of the project, two wells, one of 55-m depth and the other of 150-m depth, were drilled. The wells were equipped with pumps powered by solar energy, he noted. The project also included rehabilitation of the flood-damaged water supply system in Qarashi. Kuwait's donation aims to provide sustainable sources of safe water to people in the region and neighboring areas who suffer from recurrent natural disasters, Enezi added. He appealed to donors and the private sector to donate to the KRCS, its programs and projects aimed at helping the

needy and providing them with a decent living.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Ambassador to Tunisia Ali Al-Dhafiri yesterday inaugurated schools in Tunisia's inner provinces of Qairawan, Mahdia and Siliana that have been rebuilt with Kuwaiti funding as part of a restoration project. The project included the restoration and maintenance of schools in Tunisia's inner regions and equipping those buildings with the latest technology, which positively enhances the educational process, Dhafiri told KUNA.

The first phase of the project was funded by the Foreign Assistance Committee of the Kuwaiti Cabinet in coordination with the Tunisian ministry of education, while other Kuwaiti donors will contribute to the financing of the second phase, he explained. Dhafiri considered the project as a confirmation of Kuwait's keenness on contributing to development in Tunisia. In late 2015, the Tunisian education ministry launched a national project to renovate and improve all Tunisian schools, especially in the interior provinces. —KUNA



Kuwait Red Crescent Society and Kenya Red Cross members are seen. —KUNA

## Authorities arrest man who stole military vehicle

**KUWAIT:** The interior ministry's PR and security media department yesterday announced that joint efforts by the Kuwaiti army and Mubarak Al-Kabeer detectives led to the arrest of a 22-year-old Kuwaiti who had stolen a military vehicle belonging to the army and destroyed a number of other vehicles in his attempt to escape.

Notably, a video was posted on social media showing the suspect stealing the vehicle and driving away. —MoI



## Bedoon threatens to commit suicide

By A Saleh and Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** Education ministry security officers and policemen yesterday managed to prevent a bedoon from committing suicide by jumping from the first floor of MoE's headquarters in South Surra. A number of ministry employees said the man threatened to kill himself unless his children were registered in schools, despite the expiry of his security card.

### Fire at MoH office

The health ministry announced a minor fire had broken out at its health office in Washington without causing any casualties, and that work resumed shortly after the building was evacuated and automatic water sprinklers doused the flames.

### Contractor gets more time

Well-informed sources said that the Public Authority for Housing Welfare plans to approve a request by the Chinese contractor in Mutlaa to grace him more time to complete a project despite

falling behind schedule. The sources added that the housing authority believes that withdrawing the project at this time would lead to delaying the project until a new public tender is offered. "However, the Chinese contractor will be fined for the delay as per the contract signed between both parties," the sources stressed.

### New cleaning contracts

Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Fahd Al-Shola chaired yesterday the supreme planning committee's meeting, during which he reviewed cleaning departments' readiness to receive new equipment needed for the new cleaning contracts in various governorates. The meeting also discussed the municipality's new structural organization and amended some municipal bylaws.

### Fishing fuel woes

Chairman of Kuwait Fishermen Union Thaher Al-Suwayyan yesterday stressed that the problem of a lack of fuel fishermen had been suffering from is still affecting their productivity, as hundreds of fishing boats have been waiting to refuel at Fahheel harbor. "One fuel pump station is not enough for Kuwait's fishing fleet," he stressed, warning that the immediate effect of the problem will be a shortage of fish and shrimp for sale in local markets.

## Kuwait sack coach

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Football Association have sacked the national team's head coach Romeo Jozak and his coaching staff, just over a year after his appointment. The decision to terminate the Croat's contract was taken as per the recommendations of the football body's technical committee, read a statement on Wednesday. It comes after the national side suffered a 3-0 home defeat to Australia in the qualifiers for the World Cup and Asian Cup. —KUNA



Romeo Jozak

## Kuwaiti doctor: Obesity can cause cancer

**CAIRO:** A renowned Kuwaiti doctor yesterday warned that obesity among females might lead to dangerous diseases such as cancer. The proportion of obesity in women in Arab countries is quite high, Dr Salman Al-Sabah, adviser of the Kuwaiti minister of health, told KUNA on sidelines of a conference on women's health held under the theme "Improving women's health to achieve 2030 Sustainable Development Goals".

Recent studies have linked obesity to more than 13 types of cancers Dr Salman said, also noting that obesity generally causes diabetes and cardiac illnesses. Very obese pregnant women give birth to overweight children, he said, also warning that obesity rates among children and teenagers have alarmingly increased.

Only Portugal, he says, has succeeded in lowering the rate of obesity compared to the population from 36 percent to 30 percent for a specific age category, explaining that the Portuguese encouraged people to shed extra weight through healthy nutrition and exercise at schools as well as by educating women. He expressed hope that the conference wraps up with recommendations addressing women's health, particularly obesity. Dr Salman addressed the convention, speaking about obesity as a major challenge facing women. —KUNA



# PM visits Kuwait University's new campus in Shadadiya

## Rector: Sabah Al-Salem University qualitative leap at academic level

**KUWAIT:** HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah visited yesterday Kuwait University's new campus in Shadadiya. During his tour, the premier was briefed by KU's senior officials on the progress of work at the university and the measures taken before the start of the new academic year.

Kuwait University Rector Dr Hussein Al-Ansari said the establishment of the new campus of Kuwait University in Shadadiya constituted a qualitative leap forward for the national educational sector. Ansari commended continuous support by the political leadership for the grand venture that materialized with the construction

of the new KU buildings. He expressed gratitude, in particular, to HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for this major achievement at the academic level, wishing him a long life and lasting wellness.

The KU buildings in Shadadiya have been constructed according to the latest modern designs. They have been equipped with state-of-the-art technology, thus creating "an educational environment prepared to incubate creativity and innovation", he said. Meanwhile, Dr Qutaibah Al-Rezougi, director of the construction program, presented a visual display of the Sabah Al-Salem University compound. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, accompanied by senior officials, visits Kuwait University's new campus in Shadadiya yesterday. —KUNA

## CBK governor calls to support female execs

**KUWAIT:** Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait Dr Mohammad Al-Hashel yesterday affirmed the necessity of supporting and training women banking executives. Hashel was speaking at the conclusion session of a training program themed "women and leadership in business from an international perspective" organized by Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies (KIBS) in cooperation with London School of Economic and Political Science. The CBK Governor, also KIBS Chairman, said the program, which the institute organized for the first time, is one of a group of training programs. The five-day program was attended by elite women leaders from Kuwait and other GCC countries. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait Dr Mohammad Al-Hashel is seen with the program's trainees. —KUNA

## Education ministry provides healthy food to students

**KUWAIT:** The ministry of education is providing healthy food to some 40,000 students at public elementary schools. Didan Al-Ajmi, director of public relations and educational media at the ministry, said in a statement yesterday that the projects aim at encouraging students to change their bad eating habits with healthy buffets offered at schools. He was speaking at Houma elementary school for girls after launching a nutrition campaign.

Meanwhile, Wajd Al-Othman, supervisor for boosting nutrition in the society at the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition, said the authority is coordinating with national food and dairy companies to provide healthy food for pupils in government schools. Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakeries Company is contributing baked products with very low amounts of fat, sodium, sugar and calories, she said. Sharifa Al-Jaber, an official at the bakeries company, said the company is producing food for 40,000 students at 284 elementary schools throughout Kuwait. —KUNA



**Education ministry's nutrition campaign at Houma elementary school. —KUNA**

## Kuwait Airways receives five star rating from APEX

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Airways Company announced it was granted a five star rating from the Airline Passenger Experience Association (APEX) for 2019. The rating covers neutral point of views for clients, said the company in a press statement yesterday. It added that passengers on over one million flights rated about 600 international aviation companies from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019. Among the evaluation's categories are food and drink quality, Wi-Fi service, entertainment and seat comfort, it said.

On Tuesday, the company announced it had recorded accuracy of flight arrival time at Kuwait International Airport by 93.9 percent for August, compared to 88 percent in July. Moreover, the company said it came ninth in flight timing accuracy amongst 175 aviation companies in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, according to the UK's Official Aviation Guide (OAG).

Kuwait Airways was established in 1953 as a private company under the name Kuwait National Airlines Limited, launching its first flight on March 16, 1954. Kuwait government took over the company's ownership by 100 percent in 1962, and it provides flights to 49 destinations around the world. —KUNA







Indonesia forest fires surge, stoking global warming fears

Johnson vows UK will be ready for no-deal Brexit

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RIYADH: Saudi human resources professional Mashaal al-Jaloud, 33, walks in western clothes past women wearing niqab, an Islamic dress-code for women, at a commercial area in the Saudi capital Riyadh. — AFP

# ‘Rebel’ Saudi women shun abaya robe

## Trend underscores bold push for social liberties by young Saudis

**RIYADH:** Her high heels clacking on marble tiles, a defiant Saudi woman turned heads and drew gasps as she strutted through a Riyadh mall—without a body-shrouding abaya. The billowy over-garment, usually all-black, is customary public wear for women in the ultra-conservative Islamic kingdom, where it is widely seen as a symbol of piety. Last year, de facto ruler Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman hinted during an interview with CBS that the dress code may be relaxed, saying the robe was not mandatory in Islam.

But despite his sweeping liberalization drive, the practice continued as no formal edict followed. Some women subsequently mounted a rare social media protest against the restriction, posting pictures of themselves wearing the figure-concealing garment inside out. Despite the risk of provoking arch-conservatives, many others now leave their cloaks open in the front or wear them in bright colors. Mashaal al-Jaloud has taken the cultural rebellion a step further—she stopped wearing the robe.

In a stunning sight, the 33-year-old human resources specialist strolled through a mall in central Riyadh last week wearing nothing but a

burnt orange top over baggy trousers. In the crowd, there were audible gasps and arched eyebrows. Women veiled head-to-toe stared askance. Some mistook her for a celebrity. “Are you famous?” asked a woman who sidled up to her. “Are you a model?” Jaloud laughed and said she was a normal Saudi woman.

### ‘I just want to live’

Jaloud is one of only a handful of women who have abandoned the abaya in recent months. But the trend underscores a bold push for social liberties by young Saudis that may outstrip the monarchy’s capacity for change. Manahel al-Otaibi, a 25-year-old activist, has also foregone the garment. “For four months I have been living in Riyadh without an abaya,” said Otaibi, walking along Tahlia street, a restaurant-lined thoroughfare, in casual overalls. “I just want to live the way I want, freely and without restrictions. No one should force me to wear something I don’t want.”

The abaya, which has existed for thousands of years but only became obligatory in recent decades, is also mandatory for non-Muslim women in the kingdom. The dress code was once fanatically enforced by the now-neutered reli-

gious police, and uncovered women still face random harassment in a conservative nation where attire is often associated with chastity. “There are no clear laws, no protection. I might be at risk, might be subjected to assault from religious fanatics because I am without an abaya,” Jaloud said.

In July, she posted a video on Twitter revealing that another Riyadh mall had stopped her from entering without an abaya. She said she had tried unsuccessfully to persuade its guards by playing Prince Mohammed’s television interview, in which he said women were only expected to wear “decent, respectful clothing”—not necessarily an abaya. In response to her post, the mall tweeted that it would not permit entry to “violators of public morals”. A Saudi royal also condemned her on Twitter, calling her a publicity seeker and demanding that she be punished for the “provocative” act. Jaloud said she recently faced similar hostility at a Riyadh supermarket, where a fully veiled woman threatened to call the police.

### Not linked to religion

Jaloud remains defiant, but she is still forced to wear an abaya and headscarf to work, or risk

losing her job. In a regulation that seems to be arbitrarily enforced, the Saudi labor ministry says on its website that working women are expected to be “modest, well-covered” and should not wear anything “transparent”. Prince Mohammed has sought to shake off his country’s ultra-conservative image by allowing cinemas, mixed-gender concerts and greater freedoms for women, including the right to drive.

As part of the liberalization, the kingdom has invited a host of international musicians to perform, such as rapper Nicki Minaj, well known for her skin-baring music videos. “(Minaj) is going to shake her backside and all her songs are about sex... and then everyone tells me to wear the abaya,” a young Saudi woman fumed in a recent online video that went viral.

Minaj eventually cancelled her visit, citing the kingdom’s poor human rights record. But the sentiment encapsulates the tussle between a mostly young population clamoring for greater freedoms and hardliners alarmed by the pace of reforms they see as un-Islamic. But Jaloud argued that the abaya is “not linked to religion”. “If it was, Saudi women wouldn’t take them off when they go outside the kingdom,” she said. — AFP



## International

# Turkish families seek answers over relatives' disappearances

## Disappeared men accused of having ties with terrorist organizations

**ANKARA:** After 100 days behind bars over accusations of belonging to a Turkish "terrorist organization", Mustafa Yilmaz was relieved to be back with his wife and daughter and allowed to return to work. But his problems were far from over. On February 19, six weeks after his release, he disappeared. His wife, Sumeyye Yilmaz, says CCTV footage shows him being confronted outside their home after leaving for work and taken by two men before a black van passes by. She fears he is now being held by "deep state" operatives and possibly tortured.

Yilmaz is one of 28 men that rights activists and lawmakers say have been disappeared by security forces since a failed coup in July 2016. Twenty-five of them have since reappeared—either they turned up in the custody of the authorities or near a mountain somewhere in Turkey—but Yilmaz and two others are still missing. The activists and MPs say that many of the 28 were tortured—the government says it has a zero-tolerance policy towards torture.

"Why is my partner not being released? What do they want to do? Is he still alive?" Sumeyye, 27, said in an interview with AFP, as their two-year-old daughter played nearby. "In the first few days he was taken, my daughter would ask 'Where is he?' But now she has stopped. She's a child, she's forgetting," she said, through tears.

### Hell

Yilmaz, 33, was one of six men who disappeared within a few days of each other in Ankara, Istanbul, the southern city of Antalya and the northwestern province of Edirne in February. All of them had been accused of ties to

an Islamic organization run by US-based cleric Fethullah Gulen, whom Ankara claims ordered the 2016 attempted coup. On July 28, the families were told that four of the missing were being held by Ankara police. Yilmaz and another man, Gokhan Turkmen, were not among them, which hit Sumeyye particularly hard. "The period after July 28 was like hell for me," she said.

### Not too late

Both Mustafa and Sumeyye were accused of ties to the Gulen group—a charge that has seen tens of thousands of people arrested or stripped of their jobs since the coup bid. The couple denies the claims. However, Mustafa, a physiotherapist, was arrested last October and sentenced to six years in prison. He was out pending an appeal when he disappeared. The nightmare began for Sumeyye when she received a call from her husband's employer at around 11:00 am to say he had not shown up for work.

First, she called hospitals, and even at one point feared he could have run off. But she became suspicious when the authorities showed little interest, and she says the police are still not doing enough to find her husband. "No effective investigation... or procedure has been started," Sumeyye said, adding it was "still not too late" to find him.

### Forcibly disappeared

Human Rights Watch says the six men taken in February were "forcibly disappeared" and the four who re-emerged have been denied lawyers. It said their wives had described them as traumatized. Lawmaker Omer Faruk Gergerlioglu, of the pro-Kurdish leftist Peoples' Democratic

Party who spearheaded a social media campaign to try to find the six, said he believed they had been tortured. "They were in a wretched state. When the families asked where they had been, the men said: 'Close this issue, leave it alone,'" said Gergerlioglu.

Those who took them wanted "to interrogate them for a long time," he added. The four men have since been formally charged over suspected Gulen links. "I assume that the goal here is to spread terror" among suspected Gulen supporters, said Ozturk Turkdogan, head of the Turkish Human Rights Association. "Obviously our main suspect is the state," he added.

Turkdogan said the disappearances often followed a similar pattern, particularly the use of black VW Transporters, according to CCTV images or witnesses. Contacted by AFP, no comment was provided by the Ankara public prosecutor's office and police, while the interior ministry did not respond to requests. — AFP

Analysts say the two have been pushed together by the grinding war in South Sudan, which has defied several peace attempts, and an economic crisis in Sudan, which was hard-hit by the collapse of the south's oil industry. One of Bashir's last moves before his ouster was to broker a peace deal between President Salva Kiir and his rival Riek Machar—at a time when much of the world had wearied of trying to solve the crisis. However the 2018 peace deal has stalled as Sudan has battled its own political crisis in recent months.

Observers are anxious to see if Khartoum's new government will push Kiir and Machar to advance on the implementation of the deal. The two men met this week in Juba for the first time in five months, with a power-sharing government meant to be set up by November. In a further sign of rapprochement between the two countries, Kiir offered in 2018 to mediate peace talks between Khartoum and rebels in the Blue Nile, South Kordofan and Darfur conflict zones.

The Blue Nile and South Kordofan fought alongside the south for independence, however were left north of the border in 2011 and have continued their own insurgency against Khartoum. Rebels in Darfur also waged a long war over marginalization in the western region. Hamdok has vowed to end these conflicts which have left thousands dead and millions displaced.

This week armed groups from those areas held talks in Juba which ended Wednesday in the signing of a deal on "pre-negotiation principles" with Khartoum. "We assure them and the people of Sudan in general that all the suffering and the killing and marginalization will end," said General Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, deputy chairman of the Sudan Sovereign Council. — AFP



**ANKARA:** Sumeyye Yilmaz speaks to AFP in her home in Ankara about how she believes her husband, Mustafa Yilmaz, has been abducted and fears he may be being tortured. — AFP

Party who spearheaded a social media campaign to try to find the six, said he believed they had been tortured. "They were in a wretched state. When the families asked where they had been, the men said: 'Close this issue, leave it alone,'" said Gergerlioglu.

Those who took them wanted "to interrogate them for a long time," he added. The four men have since been formally charged over suspected Gulen links. "I assume that the goal here is to spread terror" among suspected Gulen

supporters, said Ozturk Turkdogan, head of the Turkish Human Rights Association. "Obviously our main suspect is the state," he added.

Turkdogan said the disappearances often followed a similar pattern, particularly the use of black VW Transporters, according to CCTV images or witnesses. Contacted by AFP, no comment was provided by the Ankara public prosecutor's office and police, while the interior ministry did not respond to requests. — AFP

## Sudan PM Hamdok arrives in Juba on first official trip

**JUBA:** Sudan's new prime minister, Abdalla Hamdok, arrived in South Sudan yesterday on his first official visit since becoming premier, declaring "the sky is the limit" for ties between the former foes. Hamdok, heading an 18-member transitional government following the overthrow of Omar al-Bashir, is set to meet South Sudan President Salva Kiir as well as Sudanese opposition leaders on his two-day visit.

"I am very delighted to be here in my second home, Juba. We are looking for a very strategic, very distinguished relationship between our two nations, and the sky is the limit for this relationship," Hamdok said upon his arrival. "We hope to have a very prosperous relationship that will address issues of trade, border issue, oil, free movement of our people between the two countries and all these agendas."

South Sudan split from the north in 2011 after decades of bloody war with Khartoum, famously becoming the world's youngest nation. But just two years later, it plunged into its own internal conflict, with catastrophic consequences. While tensions remain high between south and north over ongoing border disputes and the transfer of oil to the north, the two nations have increasingly moved to normalize ties in recent years.

## Taleban car bomb blast kills four Afghan special forces in Kabul

**KABUL:** A suicide bomber targeted an Afghan Special Forces base in Kabul yesterday, killing at least four commandos, officials said, as violence continued to escalate following the collapse of peace talks between the United States and Taleban insurgents. The bomber blew up an explosives-laden minibus at the entrance to the camp in Chahar Asyab district, killing the four special forces members and wounding another three, the Defense Ministry said in a statement. Taleban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid issued a statement claiming responsibility for the attack, which he said killed more than 200 commandos. The insurgents routinely issue exaggerated casualty claims.

Mujahid said the bomber had been infiltrated into the base well before the attack. The latest attack underscored expectations of an escalation in violence following US President Donald Trump's sudden cancellation of the talks with the Taleban aimed at withdrawing US troops and ending 18 years of war in Afghanistan. Last week, a Taleban suicide blast killed at least 10 civilians and two NATO service members near the US embassy in Kabul. — Reuters



## International

# Mugabe family sets burial for home village, not 'Heroes' shrine

## Zimbabweans divided over Mugabe's legacy as tensions erupt over burial

**HARARE:** Zimbabwean ex-president Robert Mugabe will be buried next week in his village, his family said yesterday, delivering an apparent snub to government plans to bury him at a national monument. Mugabe died in Singapore last week aged 95, leaving Zimbabweans divided over the legacy of a leader once lauded as a liberation hero but whose autocratic 37-year rule ended in a coup in 2017.

Tensions between his family and President Emmerson Mnangagwa have erupted over whether he would be buried at the National Heroes Acre in Harare or at a private ceremony in the family homestead of Kutama in Zvimba, northwest of the capital. "His body will lie in state at Kutama on Sunday night... followed by a private burial—either Monday or Tuesday—no National Heroes Acre. That's the decision of the whole family," his nephew Leo Mugabe said.

Some family members are still bitter over Mugabe's ouster and the role his former ally Mnangagwa played. Mugabe fired Mnangagwa as first vice president in 2017 — a move many perceived as an attempt to position his wife Grace to succeed him after nearly four decades of iron-fisted rule. Soon after, Mugabe was toppled by protesters and the army in what was seen as part of a power struggle within the ruling ZANU-PF party between pro-Mnangagwa factions and Mugabe loyalists siding with his wife Grace.

The former leader had been travelling to Singapore regularly for medical treatment, but his health deteriorated rapidly after his ouster, which allies say left him a "broken soul". Mnangagwa had declared Mugabe a national hero after his death, indicating he should be buried at the monument for his role as a founding father. But the family said traditional chiefs in his home-

stead in the Zvimba region should decide.

Mugabe's body arrived from Singapore on Wednesday at Harare airport, where Mnangagwa and Grace stood together as the former leader's remains were given an honour guard. His body was later taken to his Blue Roof residence for mourning. His family said the body would be taken to Harare's Rufaro stadium on Thursday and Friday for a public ceremony.

Chinese President Xi Jinping, Cuban former leader Raul Castro and a dozen African presidents, including South Africa's Cyril Ramaphosa, are among those expected to attend Mugabe's state funeral on Saturday in Harare. "We had many differences, but beyond the differences that we had politically to serve our people, we have to reflect on his contribution," said MDC opposition party leader Nelson Chamisa, visiting Grace at the residence.

### Divided nation

Zimbabweans have been split over the death of a leader once hailed for ending the former British colony Rhodesia of white-minority rule and bringing more access to health and education to the poor. "We thought he would go to Heroes (monument), but if it's their decision we respect it," said Zephaniah Duri, who was mourning Mugabe. "Every tribe has its customs and traditions." The 35,000-seat Rufaro stadium, where the public will be allowed to see the body, is where Mugabe took his oath of office when colonial Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith handed over the reins of the country.

Mugabe hoisted the new Zimbabwe flag and lit the independence flame on April 18, 1980 — bringing hope for a new era after a long insurgency. But many Zimbabweans will remember his



**JOHANNESBURG:** Leader of South African political party the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), Julius Malema, speaks while standing next to a wax model of late Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe at a memorial service held in his honor in Soweto, Johannesburg. — AFP

tyrannical leadership and economic mismanagement that forced millions to escape a country crippled by hyper-inflation and shortages of food, drugs and fuel. Mugabe's legacy is marked by the mass killing of the minority Ndebele people in a military campaign in the early 1980s known as Gukurahundi, which took the lives of an estimated 20,000 alleged "dissidents". His violent seizure of white-owned farms helped ravage the economy,

sent foreign investors fleeing and turned Mugabe into international pariah—even if his status as a liberation hero still resonates in Africa. Zimbabweans still struggle to survive, with a once-vaunted public health system now a shambles and the economy still in crisis. Mnangagwa himself is under pressure after promising to attract investment and create jobs in a post-Mugabe era, with little success. —AFP

## Jihadists kill 9 Nigerian troops

**KANO, Nigeria:** At least nine Nigerian soldiers were killed and 27 are missing after IS-affiliated jihadists ambushed a military convoy in the country's restive northeast, two military sources have told AFP. Jihadist fighters assaulted the convoy with heavy machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades as it was en route to the town of Gudumbali in Borno state on Monday, the sources said. Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), which is affiliated with the Islamic State group, has claimed responsibility for the attack, saying its fighters killed or wounded dozens of troops.

Late Wednesday, a military officer who requested anonymity told AFP: "So far, nine bodies of soldiers were recovered. Twenty-seven soldiers are still missing and their fate remains un-

known." Another military source confirmed the provisional death toll, adding that "search and rescue is ongoing." The troops were headed to Gudumbali to reinforce coalition forces from Nigeria and Chad for a major offensive to liberate the town from jihadist control, he said.

According to SITE Intelligence, which monitors jihadist activities worldwide, ISWAP also claimed to have destroyed several trucks and captured numerous other vehicles in the attack. The Nigerian air force claimed in a statement Wednesday that it had destroyed two ISWAP gun trucks in nearby Garunda the previous day. "The attack aircraft tracked the two gun trucks as they attempted to evade detection by driving into foliage," it said.

The operation killed "some" jihadists and torched one of the gun trucks, it said, adding: "The other gun truck was also tracked and immobilized." —AFP

## Stowaway passengers killed in DR Congo train derailment

**LUBUMBASHI, DR Congo:** A freight train derailed in southeastern Democratic Republic of Congo early yesterday, killing illegal passengers who were riding on it, in the latest rail tragedy to strike the vast central African nation, officials killed. But in a chaotic situation, estimates of the death toll varied widely, from 10 to a hundred. "Another disaster! Derailing at 3am (0100 GMT) in Tanganyika (province) near Mayibaridi. Provisional toll: 50 dead and several injured," the minister for humanitarian action, Steve Mbikayi, said in a tweet.

In contrast, the provincial governor, Zoe Kabila, who is the brother of former president Joseph Kabila, issued a tweet that said, "Correction... provisional toll 10 dead, 30 injured and three railcars overturned." But witnesses at the scene and local media feared a hundred people could have been killed. Victor Umba, the union head of the national rail company SNCC, said the freight train was travelling from the town of Nyunzu to the town of Niemba when two railcars fell on their sides, crushing many people underneath.

"Those who died in this derailment were stow-

aways. It is impossible for the SNCC to provide any kind of toll," Umba told AFP. He added that the SNCC's chief was in the provincial capital of Kalemie trying to find a way to raise the carriages. "It seems that many stowaways are trapped under the derailed carriages". Railways in the DRC have a poor record for safety, hampered by derelict tracks and decrepit locomotives, many of them dating from the 1960s.

In March, at least 24 people were killed and 31 were injured Sunday when a freight train carrying illegal passengers crashed in the central region of Kasai. In November last year, 10 stowaways were killed and 24 injured near the eastern town of Samba when the brakes failed on a freight train. In November 2017, 35 people were killed when a freight train carrying 13 oil tankers plunged into a ravine in southern Lualaba province.

Like many state companies in DR Congo, the SNCC is on the brink of bankruptcy. After Kabila stepped down in January, its employees urged his successor, Felix Tshisekedi, to pay months of back wages. Its former head Sylvestre Ilunga is the country's current prime minister. —AFP



## International

# Johnson vows UK will be ready for no-deal Brexit

## Documents paint grim picture of possible public disorder

**LONDON:** Prime Minister Boris Johnson said yesterday Britain will be ready for a no-deal Brexit on October 31 despite his own government's assessment warning that planning remained "at a low level". Johnson insisted the government had been "massively accelerating" its preparations for leaving the European Union without an agreement since the August 2 report, which was disclosed on Wednesday after MPs voted for its release.

He called the "Operation Yellowhammer" forecast, drawn up with input from various departments and which warned of possible civil unrest and shortages of food and medicines following no deal, a "worst case scenario". "All the industries that matter will be ready for a no-deal Brexit," Johnson told reporters. "What you're looking at here is just the sensible preparations—the worst-case scenario—that you'd expect any government to do."

The documents painted a grim picture of possible "public disorder and community tensions" as well as logjams at Channel ports, threatening supplies, after a no-deal departure. But Paul Carter, Conservative leader of the local authority in the southeast county of Kent where there are fears of such gridlock, agreed that Johnson's administration had made "real progress" in recent weeks. "I'm pretty confident that we can avoid disruption in Kent," he told the BBC.

But French Budget Minister Gerald Darmanin said he was "a bit worried about how the British are preparing". "You don't re-create a border that hasn't existed for several years... in just a few hours," he said. The Yellowhammer release has also fuelled fears among MPs that a disorderly divorce would

be as calamitous as the documents warn. "It is unprecedented," said MP Dominic Grieve, who was expelled from the ruling Conservatives last week for voting against the government over the issue. "Even if we are ready for a no-deal Brexit, this is highly disruptive and costly."

### Johnson denies lying

Johnson took office in July promising to finally deliver on the referendum decision by leaving the EU on October 31 no matter what, but finds himself increasingly boxed in. He has no majority in the Commons and suspended parliament on Monday until October 14 in an apparent bid to thwart opposition to a possible no-deal departure. Johnson asked Queen Elizabeth II to shutter parliament for five weeks, claiming it was necessary ahead of introducing his new domestic agenda.

The suspension, known as prorogation, occurs most years but was unusually long, provoking uproar across the political spectrum and several legal challenges. The prime minister defended the decision again on Thursday, insisting he had not lied to the Queen about his motives for it. Asked by the British broadcaster if he had lied, he replied: "Absolutely not!"

A Scottish appeals court ruled Wednesday the suspension was "unlawful" and intended to "stymie parliament". Johnson's government has appealed the decision and the case is set to be heard in the Supreme Court next Tuesday. Northern Ireland's High Court on Thursday dismissed several lawsuits filed there that argued the prorogation was illegal and a no-deal Brexit breached



**LONDON:** Anti-Brexit activists wave EU flags whilst draped in Union flags as they demonstrate outside the Houses of Parliament in London. —AFP

the terms of the province's 1998 peace accord.

### Parliament recall demanded

Parliament will for now stay shut, despite calls from opposition lawmakers for its immediate recall—intensified by the release of the Yellowhammer documents. "It is also now more important than ever that parliament is recalled and has the opportunity to scrutinize these documents and take all steps necessary to stop no deal," Labor's Brexit spokesman Keir Starmer said. However, a government source told AFP on Wednesday that "nothing

is changing" until the case was concluded.

Ahead of the shutdown lawmakers passed a law aimed at preventing a no-deal Brexit, but Johnson has insisted Britain will still depart the EU on October 31. The British leader wants to renegotiate the divorce terms struck by his predecessor Theresa May, which MPs have repeatedly rejected. But European leaders accuse him of offering no viable alternatives. Johnson insisted he was "very hopeful" of getting a deal. "We can see the rough area of a landing space, of how you can do it," he said. "It will be hard, but I think we can get there." —AFP

## EU row grows over 'Way of Life' migration official's title

**BRUSSELS:** Incoming European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen came under intensifying pressure yesterday to drop the controversial title of "Protecting our European Way of Life" for her commissioner in charge of migration. The odd-sounding name has come under fire from European lawmakers, some EU member states and rights groups for sounding like the xenophobic rhetoric used by far-right groups.

Outgoing Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker weighed in, telling Euronews: "I don't like the idea that the European way of life is opposed to migration." Euronews reported that Juncker said the portfolio title should be more precise. Since von der Leyen, Germany's former defence minister, publicly attributed the portfolio to Greece's Margaritis Schinas on Tuesday, she has been increasingly challenged to change the nomenclature.

An EU spokeswoman said she had no changes to the name "to announce", but pressure is building, especially from the European Parliament. It has to approve her picks who are meant to take office with her from November 1 and top officials in major parties are demanding the title be changed before hearings start at the end of the month.

### 'We refuse the name'

Migration is a hot political issue in Europe, which experienced a wave of more than a million asylum-seekers in 2015, most of them from war-ravaged Syria. Since then, though the numbers have drastically fallen, the topic has remained in the news with tensions over an EU deal with Turkey to prevent crossings, and Mediterranean Sea rescues of boats filled with migrants. So far, von der Leyen's team has defended the title she chose, saying it was set out in political papers months ago and Schinas's portfolio oversees not only migration but also education, integration and cross-border security. Her conservative European People's Party (EPP), to which Schinas and Juncker also belong, has refused to criticize the commissioner's title. But the three other three mainstream political groups demanded it be dropped. "We don't like the name."

"We refuse the name," said Iratxe Garcia, the head of the Socialists and Democrats clan in the European Parliament. Dacian Ciolos, the leader of the Renew liberal democrat grouping, told AFP that he had spoken with von der Leyen and "she is conscious of the problem it creates". He added that he was convinced she would end up changing it. Prominent MEP Guy Verhofstadt, a liberal lawmaker who has been heading up the parliament's efforts on Brexit, tweeted: "Our 'European Way of Life' is NOT implying we want a white supremacist Europe. That's actually Europe's Original Sin and we have to fight it every single day."

### Title 'raises questions'

The issue has drawn comment from France, one of the EU most influential member states. On Wednesday, the spokeswoman for the French government, Sibeth Ndiaye, said that "the title raises questions," adding: "Personally, it's not a title I would have chosen." An official in Brussels with an organisation



**GENVAL, Belgium:** European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen smiles as she poses for a photo during a seminar in Genval. —AFP

focused on migration told AFP he was "flabbergasted". He declined to be identified as his office dealt with the Commission, but added the issue would be raised with EU officials.

Von der Leyen, when questioned Tuesday about the title attributed to the commissioner for migration, told journalists: "Our European way of life is holding up our values. The beauty of the dignity of every single human being is one of the most precious values." She and her team of commissioner candidates were on Thursday gathered just outside Brussels for an informal gathering meant to encourage communication and team spirit. —AFP



## International

# Russia targets opposition leader Navalny with mass raids

## Raids result of Kremlin hysteria after allies suffer loss in elections

**MOSCOW:** Russian investigators yesterday raided dozens of regional offices of top protest leader Alexei Navalny as well as the homes of his supporters after mass opposition rallies this summer. Navalny said the raids were the result of Kremlin "hysteria" after allies of President Vladimir Putin suffered major losses in local elections in Moscow on Sunday. Navalny, who had instructed supporters to vote strategically to push out pro-Kremlin candidates, said on YouTube: "Putin got upset and is stomping his feet."

"That's what we're seeing in 41 cities across the whole country," he added, looking tired and drawn in the video hastily shot on his mobile phone. He said the raids were being carried out at more than 200 addresses in "the biggest police operation in Russia's modern history". Police, investigators, national guard and security services were all involved and seized equipment such as phones and computers, he said.

Navalny has credited his strategic voting campaign for the ruling party losing almost a third of its seats in elections for Moscow city parliament, writing in a blog entry: "Why such hysteria? Two words: smart voting." Navalny said the raids were targeting his network of campaign offices and the homes of campaign coordinators and their relatives, as well as his Anti-Corruption Foundation, which has worked to expose officials' questionable wealth.

Law enforcement agencies have not yet made any official comment on the raids. Navalny's spokeswoman Kira Yarmysh accused authorities of trying to deal a "massive blow" to the organization. "These raids are an act of intimidation," she said. "The police's only goal is to confiscate our material and paralyze our work," she said, adding: "We won't stop." Police targeted activists across the country from Russia's westernmost exclave of Kaliningrad to the far eastern city of Vladivostok, Navalny's aides said.

Yarmysh said she had seen a vehicle marked as belonging to the powerful Investigative Committee outside Navalny's Moscow office but "we don't have any raids". In the city of Yekaterinburg in the Urals region, officers wearing scarfs over their faces and black uniforms without identifying marks prevented anyone from entering the office, local media reported. The office in the city of Perm, also in the Urals, reported that operatives climbed through the windows and then pulled the front door down.

### Witnesses in probe

The raids came after Russian investigators in August launched a money laundering probe into Navalny's foundation. Navalny's aide Leonid Volkov said on social media that those targeted by raids were being called in for questioning as "witnesses" in the probe. Navalny and his sup-



**MOSCOW:** Russian opposition activist Alexei Navalny prepares to cast his vote at a polling station during the Moscow city Duma election in Moscow. —AFP

porters organized a wave of protests over the summer after popular opposition politicians were barred from standing in the Moscow parliament election, prompting a police crackdown.

The 43-year-old charismatic opposition leader missed several of the rallies while serving a 30-day jail term for organizing previous unauthorized protests.

Since emerging as the Kremlin's chief critic and a highly effective campaigner and organizer, Navalny has faced a slew of legal action apparently aimed at hindering his activities. "The only way the police state could respond to the mass rallies was with mass raids," a lawyer for Navalny's anti-corruption foundation, Alexander Golovach, wrote on Twitter.—AFP

## Arms depot blasts damage north Cyprus hotel

**NICOSIA:** Multiple explosions at a Turkish military base in northern Cyprus damaged a hotel in a neighboring holiday resort early yesterday, prompting the evacuation of terrified tourists, officials said. Fire broke out in the arms depot at the base in Catalkoy, west of the town of Kyrenia, without causing any casualties, police said. The nearby Acapulco Hotel was damaged in the explosions, which began around 1:30 am and continued until 5 am.

Panicked hotel residents were evacuated to a safe area. It was not immediately clear what triggered the blasts. Officials said they had launched an investigation. Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akinci visited the hotel. "What matters is nobody was harmed, we can handle the rest," he said. Emergency services in Kyrenia said the fire had been contained by early morning.

The Kyrenia area on the north coast of Cyprus lies within the breakaway state which Turkish Cypriot leaders declared in 1983 but which remains recognized only by Ankara. The island has been divided on ethnic lines since Turkish troops occupied its northern third in 1974 following a Greek Cypriot coup sponsored by the military junta then in power in Athens seeking union with Greece. Turkey continues to maintain a sizeable military presence in the north of the island. —AFP

## French assembly chief, Macron ally charged over property deal

**LILLE, France:** French President Emmanuel Macron said yesterday he was sticking by his close ally Richard Ferrand after the assembly president was charged with conflict of interest over a property deal. The allegations against Ferrand first emerged in 2017, causing embarrassment for Macron who had just won power on a pledge to rejuvenate France's corruption-plagued political class. Ferrand, who had been appointed a minister in Macron's first cabinet, stepped down but later made a comeback after prosecutors dropped the case, saying there was no basis for a prosecution.

The matter did not end there however. In 2018, an anti-corruption organization filed another complaint against Ferrand, forcing the case, which relates to a property deal involving a health fund Ferrand once headed, to be re-opened. In the early hours of Thursday the magistrates leading the probe announced they had decided that the case should proceed and charged Ferrand with conflict of interest.

Reacting to the announcement, Macron said yesterday that Ferrand still had "all my confidence", government spokeswoman Sibeth Ndiaye said. Speaking to Europe 1 radio Ndiaye called Ferrand a "loyal, upstanding man with an exemplary political career" and said that there was no reason for him to step down. But the opposition was quick to react to the charges with calls for Ferrand to resign. "Being charged does not signal guilt but a serene public debate supposes that those who exercise national public roles resign pending the decision of the justice system," Socialist leader Olivier Faure tweeted, a call echoed by Nicolas Dupont-Aignan, the leader of a small anti-EU party.

### Blow for Macron

The allegations against Ferrand, one of Macron's first backers when he ran for president, were first revealed by the Ca-



**PARIS:** French President Emmanuel Macron speaks during a round table meeting with representatives and beneficiaries of the "Ateliers Sans Frontières" (Workshops without Borders), an organization helping to reintegrate unemployed people into work, as part of a visit on inclusion through employment in Bonneuil-sur-Marne, near Paris. —AFP

nard Enchaîne investigative weekly in 2017. The paper claimed that in 2011 a public insurance fund that Ferrand headed in his native Brittany agreed to rent a building from Ferrand's wife and carry out renovations that boosted its value. Ferrand, 57, denied any wrongdoing saying his wife made the fund the best offer and that he had no say in the matter. In a statement sent to AFP Thursday Ferrand said was "determined to continue (his) role" as the president of the lower house of parliament, which he has held since September 2018. He said he was "serene about the outcome of the investigation", arguing that no new evidence had been brought forward since 2017 in the case "in which there is neither harm caused nor victim." The charges against France's fourth-most important public figure, nonetheless deal a blow to Macron, who campaigned on a promise to make politics more ethical. —AFP



## International

# In victory for Trump, top US court permits asylum restrictions

## Democrats say ruling puts people's lives at risk

**WASHINGTON:** The US Supreme Court on Wednesday allowed President Donald Trump's administration to implement asylum restrictions that prevent most Central American migrants from applying at the US border. Democrats said the ruling puts people's lives at risk. The decision—temporarily in effect while lower court proceedings play out—is a victory for Trump's restrictive immigration policies, which he has made a central pillar of his presidency but which have been repeatedly challenged in court.

The top court stayed a decision by a lower court that had blocked the restrictions, which declare ineligible for asylum any migrants who enter the United States from the southern border and who have not asked for asylum protection in any of the countries they crossed to get to there. Justice Sonia Sotomayor, dissenting from the decision, wrote that: "Once again the Executive Branch has issued a rule that seeks to upend longstanding practices regarding refugees who seek shelter from persecution."

"In effect, the rule forbids almost all Central Americans... to apply for asylum in the United States if they enter or seek to enter through the southern border, unless they were first denied asylum in Mexico or another third country," she wrote. Trump took to Twitter to hail the move, saying, "BIG United States Supreme Court WIN for the Border on Asylum!"

The decision "greatly helps build on the progress we've made addressing the crisis at our southern border and will ultimately make American communities

safer," White House Principal Deputy Press Secretary Hogan Gidley said in a statement. Lee Gelemt, an attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union, one of the groups challenging the asylum restrictions, expressed hope that "we'll prevail at the end of the day."

### Life and death

"The lives of thousands of families are at stake," Gelemt said in a statement. Democrats in the House of Representatives made a similar point. "Lives will be lost. This rule will result in those fleeing fear and persecution to be turned away at our doorstep and will only exacerbate the humanitarian crisis in the region," House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler and Zoe Lofgren, who chairs the immigration and citizenship subcommittee, said in a joint statement.

"The United States can and must do better," House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Eliot Engel said that "for many refugees, this is life and death." The asylum restrictions target the flow of migrants from Central America and other countries who have tried to cross into the United States from Mexico and request asylum. These requests—often made by families saying they have fled endemic violence and poverty in their countries—allow the applicants to remain in the United States and to move around freely while their cases are adjudicated, which can take two years.

The policy is among a host of measures Trump has taken in a bid to stem the flow of migrants, including the deployment of troops at the southern border. Of-



**TEXAS:** In this file photo tents are seen at a temporary holding facility for migrants that has been in use since early May, to hold the record numbers of migrants entering the El Paso border sector, in El Paso, Texas. —AFP

ficial statistics show the number of people apprehended or declared inadmissible at the southern border has dropped to around 64,000 in August, from more than 144,000 in May. The Pentagon said Tuesday that it will keep up to 5,500 military members at the border for the coming year to help combat illegal immigration.

It has also announced that it would divert \$3.6 bil-

lion in funds for construction of an anti-migrant wall on the frontier, which Trump repeatedly promised that Mexico would pay for. The diversion of the Pentagon funds to border wall construction was justified under a controversial emergency declaration made by Trump after Congress repeatedly denied the president money for the project. Trump has also pressured Mexico to take action. —AFP

## US to ban flavored vaping products as lung disease cases surge

**WASHINGTON:** US President Donald Trump's administration announced Wednesday it would soon ban flavored e-cigarette products to stem a rising tide of youth users, following a spike in vaping-linked deaths. The move could later be extended to an outright prohibition of vaping if adolescents migrate to tobacco flavors, seen as more legitimate products that help smokers quit their habit. Addressing reporters at the White House, the president said that both he and First Lady Melania Trump were worried as parents of a teenage son about an outbreak of severe lung disease that has killed six people and sickened hundreds.

"We are both reading it," he said. "A lot of people are reading, people are dying of vaping," he added, vowing to act. Trump was accompanied by Ned Sharpless, the acting head of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that regulates e-cigarettes and by Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar, who responded to a question about the proposed timeline by saying his agency would issue rules in the coming weeks. Following the release of new guidance, "there will likely be about a 30-day delayed effective date," said Azar.

"At that point, all flavored e-cigarettes other than tobacco flavor would have to be removed from the market." The agency said in a release that non-tobacco flavors were being targeted for their youth appeal, with preliminary data for 2019 showing that more than a quarter of high school students had used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days. The overwhelming majority reported using fruit, menthol or mint flavors.

While tobacco flavors will initially be exempt, manufacturers will still need to apply for FDA approval by May 2020 to continue to sell their products. But Azar also tweeted: "If data show kids migrating to tobacco-flavored products, we will do what's necessary to tackle continued youth use of these products." The news was a major blow

to the burgeoning vaping industry, worth \$10.2 billion globally in 2018, according to Grand View Research.

### Mystery illness

It comes amid growing concern over how more than 450 people who reported recent use of e-cigarettes have fallen ill, with initial symptoms including breathing difficulty and chest pain before some were hospitalized and placed on ventilators. Several teens across the country have been placed in medically-induced comas, including one whose doctors said he may require a lung transplant if he recovers.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has urged people to cease vaping while a nationwide investigation is underway. Federal authorities have yet to identify a single substance common to all cases, but New York's health department is focusing its probe on counterfeit cannabis cartridges containing vitamin E oil, which is harmful when inhaled. North Carolina medics have reported that patients developed acute lipid pneumonia, a non-infectious form of the respiratory illness that occurs when oils or fat-containing substances enter the lungs.

### Illegal advertising

E-cigarettes have been available in the US since 2006 and were widely considered a safer alternative to traditional smoking, even though experts had warned even before the current wave of illnesses that it may take decades to learn about vaping's long-term effects. While e-cigarettes do not contain the estimated 7,000 chemical constituents present in traditional cigarettes, a number of substances have been identified as potentially harmful and the vapor could contain traces of metal, according to a 2018 study prepared for Congress.

It's also not clear why the US is so far alone in reporting such cases, and whether they are even new, or only being recognized now by doctors after earlier misdiagnoses. Whatever the case, wider public and political opinion appears to be hardening. Trump's announcement received bipartisan support, including from his longtime Republican critic and former presidential candidate Mitt Romney, and several Democrats including Senate whip Dick Durbin, who commended the FDA for "doing its job." —AFP

## 2,500 unaccounted for in Dorian aftermath

**NASSAU, Bahamas:** About 2,500 people are unaccounted for in the Bahamas following Hurricane Dorian, the archipelago's National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) said Wednesday. NEMA spokesman Carl Smith told reporters that some of the missing people may eventually be located. "At this point, there are approximately 2,500 individuals registered on the Bahamian government register (of missing people)," Smith said.

"This list has not yet been checked against government records of who is staying in shelters or who have been evacuated," he said. "Some individuals who have been evacuated from Abaco and Grand Bahama have not yet registered with social services," Smith said. "As we are able to cross-reference our data sets, we will be able to inform family members and reunite survivors with loved ones." Approximately 76,000 people were affected by Dorian, the UN's International Organization for Migration (IOM) has said, citing official reports.

Of these, thousands have been evacuated and about 860 are in emergency shelters in the capital city of Nassau. At least 50 people died in the hurricane, which slammed into the northern Bahamas as a Category 5 storm, and officials have said they expect the number to rise significantly. "We're not going to speculate on what the final numbers will be," Smith said. "We understand that people are concerned and so are we." The NEMA spokesman said more than 5,500 people have been evacuated so far from the northern Bahamas islands of Grand Bahama and Abaco, which were devastated by the storm. —AFP



# Thousands detained in Kashmir crackdown under Public Safety Act

## India says detentions necessary to maintain order, prevent violence

**SRINAGAR:** Authorities in Kashmir have arrested nearly 4,000 people since the scrapping of its special status last month, government data shows, the most clear evidence yet of the scale of one of the disputed region's biggest crackdowns. Muslim-majority Kashmir, claimed by both India and Pakistan, has been in turmoil since India stripped its portion of the region of its autonomy and statehood on Aug. 5, leading to clashes between security forces and residents and inflaming tension with Pakistan.

India said the removal of the status that its part of Kashmir has held since independence from Britain in 1947 would help integrate it into the Indian economy, to the benefit of all. In an attempt to stifle the protests that the reform sparked in Kashmir, India cut internet and mobile services and imposed curfew-like restrictions in many areas. It has also arrested more than 3,800 people, according to a government report dated Sept 6 and seen by Reuters, though about 2,600 have since been released. A spokeswoman for India's interior ministry did not respond to a request for comment.

Neither did Jammu and Kashmir police. It was not clear on what basis most of the people were being held but an Indian official said some were held under the Public Safety Act, a law in Jammu and Kashmir state that allows for detention for up to two years without charge. The data for the first time shows the extent of the detentions, as well as indicating who was picked up

and where. More than 200 politicians, including two former chief ministers of the state were arrested, along with more than 100 leaders and activists from an umbrella organization of pro-separatist political groups.

The bulk of those arrested - more than 3,000 - were listed as "stone pelters and other miscreants". On Sunday, 85 detainees were shifted to a prison in Agra in northern India, a police source said. Rights group Amnesty International said the crackdown was "distinct and unprecedented" in the recent history of the region and the detentions had contributed to "widespread fear and alienation". "The communication blackout, security clampdown and detention of the political leaders in the region has made it worse," said Aakar Patel, head of Amnesty International India.

### Right to life

India says the detentions are necessary to maintain order and prevent violence, and points to the relatively limited number of casualties compared with previous bouts of unrest. The government says only one person is confirmed to have died compared with dozens in 2016, when the killing of a militant leader sparked widespread violence.

"The right to life is the most important human right," India's national security adviser Ajit Doval told reporters recently. The report contains data from the 13 police districts that



**NEW DELHI:** Members and supporters of the National Federation of Indian Women hold placards as they take part in a demonstration against the Indian government's move to revoke the special autonomy of the region guaranteed under Article 370 and 35A in New Delhi. — AFP

make up the Kashmir Valley, the most populous part of the Himalayan region where the main city of Srinagar is located. The largest number of arrests have been in Srinagar, the data shows, at nearly 1,000. Earlier unrest often centered in rural areas. Of the detained political leaders, more than 80 were from the

People's Democratic Party, formerly in coalition in Jammu and Kashmir state with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party. About 70 are from the National Conference, which has for years dominated politics in Indian Kashmir, and more than a dozen from India's main opposition Congress party. — Reuters

## Bangladesh PM blames Myanmar for Rohingya repatriation failure

**DHAKA:** Bangladesh's prime minister has blamed Myanmar for the failure of a recent attempt to repatriate Rohingya refugees, saying its neighboring country did not do enough to win the community's trust. The comments from Sheikh Hasina came three weeks after a fresh push to return the Muslim minority to Myanmar's conflict-scarred Rakhine state that fell flat when no-one turned up. Some 740,000 Rohingya fled their villages in Rakhine following a military crackdown in August 2017, joining nearly 200,000 already living in squalid camps across the border in southeast Bangladesh.

"We've seen Myanmar could not win Rohingya's trust in creating a conducive situation (in Rakhine) for their dignified return," Hasina said in parliament late Wednesday. "We had full preparation, but still the repatriation did not start... uncertainty looms over Rohingya getting back their homes, land and other properties." Hasina said she had asked other Asian nations including China, India and Japan to help resolve the crisis.

Her comments reflect Dhaka's frustration over the lack of a resolution to the refugee crisis. A previous repatriation offer was rejected by Rohingya leaders in October. Her government has also started to crack down on activity in the camps amid a recent outbreak of violence and rising tensions with locals. Dhaka has imposed a virtual internet blackout in the camps in the border towns of Teknaf and Ukhiya by cutting access to 3G and 4G mobile internet networks. Experts have said 2G networks are too slow for internet use. Rohingya leaders have repeatedly said the refugees will not return to their homeland unless their safety is ensured, their rights and citizenship are granted and they are allowed to resettle in their villages. —AFP

## Embattled Puerto Rico's governor Rossello quits

**SAN JUAN:** Puerto Rico's embattled governor Ricardo Rossello announced his resignation late Wednesday following two weeks of massive protests triggered by the release of a text exchange in which he and others mocked gay people, women and hurricane victims. Protesters who had thronged the streets near the governor's mansion since the afternoon erupted into cheers as the news broke, shooting fireworks and waving Puerto Rican flags. "I announce that I will be resigning from the governor's post effective today, August 2 at 5 pm," Rossello said, in a video statement posted on the government's Facebook page.

The rallies started July 13, when the Center for Investigative Journalism released 889 pages of text chats on the encrypted messaging app Telegram in which Rossello and 11 other male administration members criticized officials, politicians and journalists. "I trust that Puerto Rico will continue united and move forward as it always has," Rossello said. "And I hope that this decision will serve as a call for reconciliation of citizens."

Rossello said he made the decision taking into account the complaints against him and after discussion with his family. Puerto Ricans had gathered at the gates of the governor's mansion, known as La Fortaleza, in San Juan, ahead of the rumored announcement. "Everyone feels betrayed by him," celebrity musician Rene Perez

("Residente") told Spanish-language news channel Telemundo at the protest, shortly before the governor's announcement. He later tweeted his delight at Rossello's resignation, saying the country had "discovered that what unites us is the heart". Playwright Lin-Manuel Miranda, creator of the hit musical "Hamilton" and whose family are from Puerto Rico, also praised the protesters on Twitter. Other local celebrities, including pop star Ricky Martin and trap musician Benito Martinez ("Bad Bunny"), have also been leading support for the protests.

### Impeachment on horizon

Forty-year-old Rossello said that Justice Secretary Wanda Vazquez would temporarily succeed him. Puerto Rican House Speaker Johnny Mendez had already convened an extraordinary legislative session that was to begin the impeachment process against Rossello yesterday. At a press conference Wednesday afternoon, Mendez had said that if the governor did not resign, he would be removed. Rossello faced a full-blown political crisis over the chat scandal and corruption cases involving money that was supposed to help victims of Hurricane Maria, which devastated Puerto Rico in 2017 and killed nearly 3,000 people.

More than a dozen other government officials have already resigned in the wake of the scandal. Rossello had reiterated as recently as Tuesday that he would not resign, having already said he would not seek reelection in 2020. Prior to the devastation wrought by Hurricane Maria, Puerto Rico suffered a serious fiscal crisis that forced the government to file for bankruptcy in May 2017. Budget cuts prompted many Puerto Ricans to flee. Combined with the post-hurricane exodus, Puerto Rico lost four percent of its population. — AFP



## International

Friday, September 13, 2019

# US invokes regional defense treaty over Venezuela crisis

## ‘Maduro poses threat to Venezuelan people,’ says Pompeo

**WASHINGTON:** The United States invoked a regional defense pact Wednesday with 10 other countries and Venezuela’s opposition after “bellicose” moves by Nicolas Maduro’s regime. A request to invoke the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (TIAR) came from the Venezuelan opposition, said a statement from US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, retweeted early yesterday by President Donald Trump.

“Recent bellicose moves by the Venezuelan military to deploy along the border with Colombia as well as the presence of illegal armed groups and terrorist organizations in Venezuelan territory demonstrate that Nicolas Maduro not only poses a threat to the Venezuelan people, his actions threaten the peace and security of Venezuela’s neighbors,” Pompeo said. Venezuela was thrust into a political crisis in January when opposition leader Juan Guaido declared himself acting president in a direct challenge to Maduro’s authority over the country from which millions have fled economic deprivation.

The opposition branded the socialist leader a “usurper” after his re-election last year in a poll widely viewed as rigged. Pompeo said in the statement invoking the pact is “recognition of the increasingly destabilizing influence” the Maduro

regime exerts on the region. “Catastrophic economic policies and political repression continue to drive this unprecedented refugee crisis, straining the ability of governments to respond,” he said.

“We look forward to further high-level discussions with fellow TIAR parties, as we come together to collectively address the urgent crisis raging within Venezuela and spilling across its border through the consideration of multilateral economic and political options.” On Tuesday Venezuela’s armed forces chiefs said they had begun mobilizing 150,000 troops for military exercises on the Colombian border, after accusing Colombia of plotting to spark a military conflict.

Last week Maduro said Colombia was using the rejection by dissident FARC leaders of a peace accord to try to provoke a military conflict, and said he was placing his forces on high alert. Meanwhile, Colombia’s right-wing President Ivan Duque had accused Maduro of sheltering FARC dissidents. Venezuela’s National Assembly—which Guaido leads—in July decided to re-join the TIAR, which could provide a legal framework for foreign military intervention. But the country’s Supreme Court annulled the decision to join.

Guaido is backed by more than 50 na-



**CARACAS:** In this file photo Venezuelan opposition leader and self-proclaimed acting president Juan Guaido attends a session of the National Assembly in Caracas. —AFP

tions, including the United States and many others in the TIAR, which was originally ratified by 23 countries at the start of the Cold War. Five of those—at the time all under leftist governments—left in 2012, while Mexico distanced itself in 2004. Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Venezuela withdrew over Washington’s refusal to

take Argentina’s side in 1982 after it invaded the British-ruled Falkland Islands—claiming American inaction meant the pact was meaningless. Despite US backing Guaido has failed to dislodge Maduro, who still enjoys support from Russia, China, and Cuba as well as Venezuela’s military leadership.—AFP

## Paris, four other French cities ban use of pesticides

**PARIS:** Paris and four other French cities yesterday banned the use of synthetic pesticides within their boundaries, as an anti-chemicals movement that began in the countryside gains momentum. Lille in the north, Nantes in the west, Grenoble in the southeast and the central city of Clermont-Ferrand joined Paris in implementing the ban, citing the need to safeguard biodiversity and public health. The move is mainly symbolic given that the 2017 law already bans the use of synthetic pesticides in public parks and spaces. And since January, home gardeners countrywide have also been banned from using synthetic pesticides. They may use only those made with natural ingredients. The few urban areas not included by the bans include green spaces managed by private property owners, such as in apartment blocks, or by companies such as state rail operator SNCF which use the controversial weedkiller glyphosate on train tracks. Environment Minister Elisabeth Borne slammed Thursday’s announcement by the five cities—all of which are run by left-wing or Green opposition parties — as a “publicity stunt”.

President Emmanuel Macron’s centrist government has proposed banning the use of pesticides to within 5-10 meters of residential areas—a proposal slammed by environmentalists as not going far enough. The head of the Greens group in Lille

city council, Stephane Baly, said the cities’ aim was “to make the government cave in”. The current bans do not cover some 600 hectares (1,500 acres) of land in Paris, according to Penelope Komites, an MP of Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo’s Socialist Party. “We have to protect our city’s inhabitants,” she said.

### France growing green

Dozens of small towns and villages, where houses abut fields, have already issued decrees cracking down on the use of chemical sprays. The movement began in earnest in May 18 in the Brittany village of Langouet where a mayor banned the use of pesticides within 150 meters of a home or business. A court later invalidated the ban, ruling that only the state has the power to ban pesticides for public health reasons.

But Mayor Daniel Cueff had by then already won legions of admirers, with villages and towns, from the Normandy town of Val-de-Reuil to the wealthy Paris suburb of Sceaux, following suit. The bans reflect the growing concern among French citizens, particularly in rural areas, over the continued use of the weedkilling chemical glyphosate, found in herbicides such as Monsanto’s Roundup.

France is one of the EU’s heaviest users of the herbicide, which is widely used by farmers to spray crops even though the World Health Organization has described it as “probably carcinogenic”, a finding disputed by Monsanto. The impact of chemical pollution has slowly risen up the political agenda in France as voters grow increasingly concerned about environmental degradation and climate change. The issue is expected to be among voters’ top priorities when they go to the polls in local elections next year.—AFP

## 250,000 pupils out of school as storm hits southeast Spain

**MADRID:** Torrential rains hit southeastern Spain overnight, sparking major flooding in the Valencia region and closing schools in a move affecting a quarter of a million children, officials said yesterday. They caused chaos on the roads, cutting public transport and prompting the Clariano river to burst its banks, flooding homes and causing the evacuation of surrounding areas, the emergency services said.

Footage shared by the local AVAMET weather service showed cars being swept away in fast-flowing water in Moixent, and torrents of water engulfing the nearby town of Ontinyent, which borders the Clariano and saw its heaviest rainfall since records began in 1917, the agency said. With the region on red alert, regional authorities said they had ordered the closure of schools in 84 municipalities, affecting more than 255,000 pupils. Torrential rain and high winds were continuing to batter southern Valencia and northern Alicante and would likely continue into Friday, the national AEMET weather service said. —AFP



## International

# Indonesia forest fires surge, stoking global warming fears

## Firefighters battle to extinguish blazes belching thick white smog

**PEKANBARU, Indonesia:** The number of blazes in Indonesia's rainforests has jumped sharply, satellite data showed yesterday, spreading smog across Southeast Asia and adding to concerns about the impact of increasing wildfire outbreaks worldwide on global warming. Illegal blazes to clear land for agricultural plantations have been raging on Sumatra and Borneo islands, with Indonesia deploying water-bombing helicopters and thousands of security forces to tackle them.

It is just the latest such outbreak globally—huge blazes have torn through the Amazon in South America while bushfires are sweeping across eastern Australia in an unusually ferocious and early start to the wildfire season. Indonesia's forest fires are an annual problem but have been worsened this year by particularly dry weather, and in recent days sent toxic smog floating over Malaysia and triggered a diplomatic row. The number of "hotspots"—areas of intense heat detected by satellite which indicate a high chance of fire—jumped sharply in Indonesia on Wednesday, according to the Singapore-based ASEAN Specialized Meteorological Centre.

There were 1,619 hotspots detected on the Indonesian part of Borneo and Sumatra up from 861 a day earlier, according to a tally from the centre, which monitors forest fires and smog outbreaks. In hard-hit Riau province on Sumatra, firefighters were battling round the clock through charred forests as they sought to extinguish blazes belching thick white smog, AFP reporters said. Provincial capital Pekanbaru was

blanketed in dense smoke, leaving the sky dark even at midday. Residents sought to go about their daily lives as usual, with many wearing only rudimentary face masks.

Kiki Taufik, a forests campaigner with Greenpeace in Indonesia, said there has been little rain in the past fortnight, particularly on Indonesian Borneo which saw the sharpest increase in hotspots. Borneo is shared between Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei.

### Burning issue

Taufik saw similarities between the blazes in Indonesia and those in the Amazon, where farmers also start fires to clear land for agriculture. "This should remind people we are facing a climate crisis," he said of the recent fires around the world. "Industries are looking to expand plantations using fires." And he warned Indonesia's blazes would add to the sprawling archipelago's climate-damaging emissions, already among the highest in the world. In 2015 Indonesia suffered its worst forest fires for about two decades, which dramatically increased its greenhouse gas emissions.

Diplomatic tensions were also rising as Malaysian Environment Minister Yeo Bee Yin accused her Indonesian counterpart of being "in denial", after Jakarta insisted fires in Malaysia had caused the smog there. "Let the data speak for itself," she said in a Facebook post, indicating figures from the ASEAN centre which showed only a handful of hotspots in Malaysia compared to the hundreds in Indonesia. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad will write to In-



**RIAU, Indonesia:** An Indonesian soldier sprays water to help extinguish a fire in the Kampar regency in Indonesia's Riau province. — AFP

donesian President Joko Widodo raising concerns about the haze, she said.

Indonesian Environment Minister Siti Nurbaya Bakar hit back Wednesday, telling AFP that "hotspots are not only found in Indonesia, but also in Sarawak (on Malaysian Borneo) and peninsular Malaysia". "We are not standing idly

by," she added. Indonesian personnel have been struggling to tame the blazes as many burn underground in carbon-rich peat, which has been cleared across vast areas of the country for plantations. After being cleared and drained of water, peat is highly combustible and hard to extinguish once ablaze. — AFP

## Japan's environment minister to scrap nuclear power

**TOKYO:** Japan's newly appointed environment minister has said he wants to "scrap" nuclear power plants, warning of the need to avoid a repeat of the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster. The comments from Shinjiro Koizumi, a rising political star and son of former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, are his first on the controversial issue since he was named in a cabinet reshuffle Wednesday.

Speaking late Wednesday night, he appeared to echo his father's post-Fukushima anti-nuclear stance. "I would like to think about how we can scrap it, not how to retain it," he told reporters when asked about the government's plans for nuclear power. "We'll be finished if we let (a nuclear accident) occur twice in one country. We never know when we'll have an earthquake," he added, without specifying further.

The comments are not expected to have any immediate impact on the government's already-stated position of

moving slowly away from dependence on nuclear energy, a task complicated by Japan's considerable reliance on coal. A darling of the Japanese media, Shinjiro Koizumi is the third-youngest minister appointed to the cabinet in Japan since the end of World War II. Despite intense media spotlight, he has been coy on expressing his views on controversial issues, including the question of nuclear power.

His father is known for having shifted his own stance on nuclear power dramatically since resigning from politics, to a position of strong opposition. The government of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has said it wants to move away from nuclear energy, but it anticipates relying on the sector heavily for years to come, particularly as it works to meet its obligations under the Paris climate accord to reduce carbon emissions. Its most recent plan envisages nuclear power supplying around 20-22 percent of energy needs for the country as late as 2030. — AFP

## Australia calls on Iran to treat detainees humanely

**SYDNEY:** Australia yesterday called on Tehran to treat "humanely" three citizens detained in Iran, as it emerged two of those arrested were a travel-blogging couple on an overland trip to Britain. Foreign Affairs Minister Marise Payne said she had raised the cases "many times" with her Iranian counterpart Javad Zarif, including as recently as last week. "The government has been making efforts to ensure they are treated fairly, humanely and in accordance with international norms," she said, adding that there was "no reason" to believe the arrests were politically motivated.

Perth-based Jolie King and Mark Firkin had been documenting their journey from home to Britain on social media for the past two years but went silent after posting updates from Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan about 10 weeks ago. "Our families hope to see Mark and Jolie safely home as soon as possible," a statement released on behalf of their relatives said. Before setting off, the couple had written on their blog that they "can't wait to share all of our experiences and the beauty of all the different destinations and countries we will be visiting".

News of the arrests came after Australia's conservative government announced it would contribute a frigate and surveillance aircraft to a US-led mission to protect shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, with tensions high in the Gulf region. But Payne said the detention of the couple and a third person—reported to be a British-Australian woman and academic—was not related to broader global issues. "We have no reason to think that these arrests are connected to international concern over Iran's nuclear program, United Nations sanction enforcement or maritime security of the safety of civilian shipping," she said.

Already difficult relations between Iran and US allies have threatened to boil over since President Donald Trump in 2018 abandoned a deal to curb Tehran's nuclear programme, and Iran resumed proscribed nuclear activities. The Times newspaper in London reported that King, who was being held in Tehran's Evin prison with the other arrested woman, had been told she was being held as part of a plan to facilitate a prisoner swap.

Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, a British-Iranian project manager with Thomson Reuters Foundation, has been held in Tehran since 2016 on sedition charges, a case that has caused major tensions with the United Kingdom. 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. It was not immediately clear if any of the three have been charged. — AFP



# Lifestyle

Friday Times

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2019

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In this file photo Sophia the Robot delivers a speech at the National Auditorium in the framework of the iMexico siglo XXI (Mexico XXI Century) forum.—AFP

At NY Fashion Week, robotic dresses take on a life of their own

See Pages 23





Czech pop singer Karel Gott

## ‘Sinatra of the East’ Karel Gott has acute leukaemia

Czech pop singer Karel Gott, who is hugely popular at home and in neighboring Germany, said yesterday he was undergoing treatment for acute leukaemia just years after recovering from cancer. “I’m undergoing ambulatory treatment and hospital checks with doctors monitoring my overall condition,” the 80-year-old singer dubbed “the Golden Voice of Prague” by fans wrote on Facebook. Gott, who is also a painter, added that he was about to complete his autobiography and helping out with a documentary about his life.

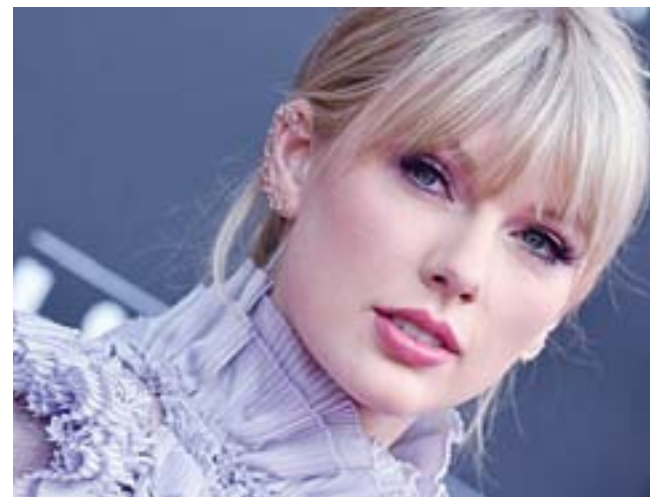
Dubbed “Divine Karel” for his impeccable tenor voice, Gott has been voted the most popular singer 42 times in the annual Golden Nightingale poll of Czech music fans. He has released almost 300 LPs and CDs, selling tens of millions of copies. Fans in neighboring Germany also relish the singer who is particularly known for singing the German theme tune for the “Maya the Bee” children’s TV series.

Gott’s hits include cover versions of Roy Orbison’s “Pretty Woman” and Alphaville’s “Forever Young,” but most of them were written by Czech composers. He rose to stardom in the 1960s when he sang in the US and what was then West Germany, and represented Austria in the Eurovision song contest. At that time, German papers described him as the “Sinatra of the East”. —AFP

# Taylor Swift signs up for ‘race that stops a nation’

Taylor Swift is heading to Australia to perform at the “race that stops a nation”, with the pop superstar strutting her stuff before the Melbourne Cup, organizers announced yesterday. The Grammy Award-winner will sing two songs from her latest hit album “Lover” before witnessing the famous horse race that has been run on the first Tuesday of November since 1876. The Victoria Racing Club made the announcement on social media, saying it was “super excited” about Swift’s one-off public appearance in Australia following the new album release. “Sorry Taylor, we’ll try to calm down,” it added.

VRC chief executive Neil Wilson told national broadcaster ABC it was a strategic choice to target a younger demographic. “We’re targeting more and more of the next generation coming through,” he said of the event that is so important that race day is a public holiday in the state of Victoria. Swift’s appearance is expected to spark a rush for tickets from music fans as well as the usual Flemington race course punters. —AFP



Taylor Swift



In these file photo Daniel Johnston performs during the 2005 South By South West Music Festival March 16, 2005 at The Austin Music Hall in Austin, Texas. —AFP

## Influential singer-songwriter Daniel Johnston dead at 58

Daniel Johnston, one of rock’s ultimate loners beloved for his earnest if haunting lyricism, died Wednesday of natural causes. He was 58 years old. The enigmatic singer-songwriter and visual artist had been in and out of the hospital in recent months for issues linked to his kidneys, his brother and manager Dick Johnston told AFP. But the death was “unexpected,” his brother said, saying “just yesterday his spirits were great and his ankles were swollen and he was looking and feeling really good.”

In between stints in psychiatric care for severe manic depression, Johnston gave new meaning to lo-fi with decades’ worth of homemade recordings in which he pours out stories of personal pain and unrequited love set to classic, Beatles-inspired pop. In recent years, he had largely been under his family’s care in the small town of Waller in eastern Texas. Two years ago, the artist, who composes on piano and has traditionally performed on guitar, embarked on a tour that would be his last.

He put aside instruments to sing with bands like Fugazi that have taken inspiration from him and picked out set lists from Johnston’s vast repertoire. High-profile guests are not new for Johnston, whose songs have been covered by major acts like Pearl Jam, Tom Waits and Beck. His career enjoyed a major boost when the late Kurt Cobain appeared on MTV in one of Johnston’s T-shirts, leading to a surge of interest in the outsider artist who at the height of Nirvana’s fame was institutionalized.

Born in Sacramento, California on January 22, 1961, Johnston was raised in West Virginia. He became a mainstay of the underground rock circles in Texas’ capital Austin in the early 1980s, offering up homemade cassettes to his friends and customers at his McDonald’s day job. The Austin City Limits music festival paid tribute to Johnston, saying the city known for its eclectic music had “lost a giant today.” He began drawing attention from members of the music industry with songs like “Speeding Motorcycle” and “Don’t Play Cards with Satan” for poignant lyrics as well as eclectic art on his tapes. Before the announced retirement from touring, Johnston had appeared to be improving health and in the 2000s traveled to play in Europe and Japan. A prolific sketcher, he has also found growing interest in his paintings, with the latest exhibition taking place this month in Tokyo.

At his final New York performance in 2017, he took the stage to a standing ovation after a screening of “The Devil and Daniel Johnston,” the award-winning 2005 documentary on his troubled but prodigiously creative life. That show was significantly less eventful than his first major trip to the metropolis in 1988. Invited to record with alternative rockers Sonic Youth, Johnston punched the band’s drummer Steve Shelley and was forced into a hospital-only to escape and show up as an opening act at famed underground club CBGB. —AFP

## Minogue didn't think her Glastonbury performance was 'good enough'

Kylie Minogue didn’t think her Glastonbury performance was “good enough”. Despite setting the record for the most-watched festival performance on the BBC and getting rave reviews for her Sunday afternoon’s legends slot in June, the ‘Love At First Sight’ hitmaker has admitted she thinks she could have done a “better” job, though she admitted she can be “so hypercritical” of herself. Kylie told GQ magazine: “My reaction was so at odds with the response and the reception it got. “I hadn’t done it as well as I wanted. “I’ve always been so hypercritical. “Was this supposed to be the pinnacle of my career? It’s not good enough. I’m better than that.” An average audience of 3.2 million watched her career-spanning set.

There was a peak of 3.9 million during closing numbers ‘Dancing’ and ‘Spinning Around’. Ed Sheeran’s 2017 Glastonbury set had previously been the highest-rated, with 3.1 million viewers. The Australian pop superstar’s Glastonbury performance was 14 years after she withdrew from a spot on the Pyramid Stage at Worthy Farm due to her breast cancer diagnosis. As the crowd cheered her, an emotional Kylie addressed her fans: “I wished things were different - but life is what it is. We’re all here in this moment.” Meanwhile, the ‘Especially For You’ hitmaker has also opened up about worries about becoming a “tribute act to herself”.



The ‘Golden’ singer admits she always feared how she would approach her career as it went on and she refuses to just keep singing her old hits. Asked why it took her so long to get the credit she deserved, she said: “Tall Poppy Syndrome. I have copped that always, forever ... I had to learn about that really early on. When I look back on some of those moments some of those interviews I had to do, were honestly hell. I am just really glad that I didn’t give in. And I say give in, as opposed to give up because there’s a big difference. Now I’ve reached a point where, I don’t want to become a tribute act to myself. No way. No thank you. And maybe Glastonbury has allowed me to do what I love, which is wipe the slate clean.”

And the 51-year-old singer insists she has no “master strategy” for the next few years and is just seeing how things come in the next five or ten years. She added: “I never really plan, there’s no ‘ve-’, ten-year master strategy, but I always think, ‘I wonder what’s round the corner?’ Maybe I’ll just take a peek. And to do that, to be in that position, you have to work. It’s physical, it’s emotional. That’s what I would like people to understand. I don’t want to be labeled a fighter. Maybe that’s the wrong word. I’m just ... curious.” —Bang Showbiz



# 'Little Mermaid' can help save oceans, says Bardem



Spaniard actor Javier Bardem poses for AFP during the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival Day 7, in Toronto, Ontario. — AFP

ocean treaty, and warning that "we can't afford to get it wrong." But he would also like to see Hollywood doing more with its "potential reach of millions of people" to foster change.

In recent talks with Rob Marshall for Dis-

ney's live-action remake of "Little Mermaid," Bardem says he urged the director to add environmental messages to the film. "You have to take advantage of this amazing, beautiful story written by (Hans Christian) Andersen and bring the pollution of the oceans into it," said Bardem. "You can reach millions and millions of younger generations ... that is something movies like this could and should do." Marshall was "very open to it," according to Bardem-but convincing a certain giant corporation might be another matter. "This is a big machinery. He's not an auteur director who has his own little movie where he can have every decision-this is Disney."

## 'Daddy will be a hero'

Bardem—who won an Academy Award for 2007's "No Country for Old Men"—admits this is not his only motivation for signing up for "Little Mermaid." He and wife Penelope Cruz have two children including a six-year-old daughter. "I will immediately become her hero

forever," he joked. "Daddy will be a hero! Just for that it's worth it." But becoming a parent has also hardened his resolve to take up the cause. "Once you have a child, you become a father of every child in the world. I know it sounds very cheesy, but it's true," he said.

"They will be 18 or 20 years old and they will turn to us and they will say 'Shame on you. You knew-what did you do about it?'" For Bardem, that is partly choosing roles with important messages. In his upcoming film "Dune," Bardem plays the leader of the last surviving tribe on a planet whose ecosystem has collapsed, forced to recycle saliva, sweat and urine to endure the heat. "That can be a reality in 20 years," he said. Admittedly it is harder to find an ecological reason for signing up to play Frankenstein's monster in a suspended Universal project—"No, I guess he's not vegan," joked Bardem.—AFP

## Netflix, Apple cross swords in Indian streaming market

Competition in India's booming streaming market is heating up as Netflix joins forces with a director of Bollywood feel-good blockbusters and Apple launches its TV platform for 99 rupees (\$1.39) a month. Netflix announced late Wednesday a long-term partnership with Karan Johar's Dharma Entertainment to make a range of new fiction and non-fiction series and films for the platform. Johar has directed eight films including "Kuch Kuch Hota Hai" with Bollywood megastar Shah Rukh Khan, and "Raazi", nominated for best picture at next week's Indian International Film Academy (IIFA) Awards, dubbed the Bollywood Oscars.

"It's going to be P.H.A.T-pretty hot and tempting," said Johar, whose Dharma Entertainment is one of India's biggest production firms and which already teamed up with Netflix for the successful "Lust Stories" anthology. Netflix launched in India in 2016 and two of its Indian-made series have won critical acclaim—"Sacred Games" starring Saif Ali Khan and Nawazuddin Siddiqui, and "Leila" with Huma Qureishi. But Netflix faces stiff competition in Asia's third-largest economy as Amazon's Prime Video, Disney's Hotstar, Alt Balaji and other local platforms jostle for digital subscriptions and eyeballs.

US technology giant Apple on Wednesday announced the launch of its streaming platform Apple TV+ in India, hoping to upend competition. Netflix is available in India from 199 rupees a month and as millions of first-time users access internet in Asia's third-largest economy, analysts expect competition to intensify.

India's video-streaming industry is expected to grow at nearly 22 percent per annum to 119 billion rupees (\$1.7 billion) by 2023 according to consultancy PwC, Bloomberg News reported. Netflix chief Reed Hastings has said the company's goal is 100 million customers in India—almost 25 times its estimated subscriber base there as of this year, Bloomberg said. — AFP



Director Edward Norton, Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Willem Dafoe and Josh Pais attend the 'Motherless Brooklyn' premiere during the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival at Princess of Wales Theatre in Toronto, Canada. — AFP photos



Edward Norton attends the "Motherless Brooklyn" press conference.

## Norton tackles corruption, politics in private eye film

Ed Norton's hard-boiled, jazz-inflected detective movie "Motherless Brooklyn" explores the corrupting influence of power at a time when vulgarity and bullying are being celebrated in politics, the star said Wednesday. Set in 1950s New York, much of the film's cesspool of corruption and politics centers on the menacing presence of city planning boss Moses Randolph—a thinly veiled Robert Moses, who really did demolish so-called "slums" populated by minorities to build vast highways through Brooklyn. In turn, that character, who at one point insists he is "ahead of" rather than "above" the law, has been likened by critics to a "prefiguring of Donald Trump."

"These days it's incredible the degree to which vulgarity, of bullying, of violence are being revealed in," Norton—who wrote, directed, produced and starred in the film—told journalists at Toronto's film festival. "I thought it was interesting to look at what leads a person to get to the place where they're actually celebrating their capacity to behave that way." Norton praised the portrayal of Randolph by Alec Baldwin—who regularly depicts Trump on "Saturday Night Live"—noting how "you can feel the unapologetic place he's reached." Producer Rachel Shane told AFP the "themes of corruption and racism in our movie are very much universal and timeless, which is an unfortunate reality."

The film, out November 1, is based on Jonathan Lethem's 1999 novel, which Norton read around the same time he starred in "Fight Club," and had wanted to adapt for the big screen ever since. After his mentor Frank Minna (Bruce Willis) is killed over a shadowy deal, Norton's private eye Lionel Essrog vows to track down those responsible, uncovering a tangled web of political corruption and blackmail while learning to fend for himself.

While the book was set in the '90s, Norton shifts the action back to an era of dangerous New York streets, societal upheaval and edgy Harlem jazz clubs—Wynton Marsalis performs and helped create the score, along with Radiohead's Thom Yorke. Asked about his acclaimed portrayal of a private eye battling undiagnosed Tourette syndrome, Norton said there is an "anarchic, creative beauty" to the syndrome that is liberating for performers and enables audiences to be "inside his head and outside." "No two people have the same symptomatic expressions of it," he said. Norton added that he shared some of the character's traits. "The part of Lionel that can't move on from a thing until it sounds right probably led to moments where there were a few takes more than we needed," he said. "That compulsion to perfect something, I relate to." — AFP



## Lifestyle | Features



In this file photo a person looks at rare Robert Frank photographs from his book Robert Frank, a pioneering documentary photographer whose raw style placed him among the 20th century's greats. — AFP photos

## Robert Frank, photographer of America's underbelly, dead at 94

Robert Frank, a trailblazing documentary photographer whose raw, piercing aesthetic placed him among the 20th century's greats, has died, according to his gallery. He was 94 years old. The Swiss-born photographer rose to fame with the publication of his landmark book "The Americans," an unflinching look at US society that proved hugely influential. A spokesperson from the Manhattan gallery Pace/MacGill told AFP that Frank died overnight of natural causes in Inverness, Nova Scotia. His seminal book—published in France in 1958 and in America one year later—emerged out of a series of road trips across the United States with his family in the mid-1950s, a journey akin to those made by his friend and writer Jack Kerouac and others from the "Beat Generation."

Eschewing classic photographic techniques, Frank pioneered the snapshot, capturing telling vignettes in black and white as they presented themselves, exploring the realities of everyday people for whom the American Dream rang hollow. He produced 28,000 images that were boiled down to 83 for the book that rewrote the rules of photojournalism. As Kerouac wrote in the preface of the US edition, Frank "sucked a sad poem right out of America onto film." At lunch counters and drive-in movie theaters, on Route 66 and at champagne get-togethers, his gritty, subjective style laid bare a wide range of emotions and relationships, notably racial, that were rarely found in the popular illustrated magazines of the time. Praising Frank's "extraordinarily keen intellect," his gallerist and friend Peter MacGill said the artist "changed the way the world looks at America." "Through the unvarnished, phenomenally capable eye of an immigrant, he saw us for what we are."



In this file photo people visit the exhibition "Sidelines" by Swiss photographer Robert Frank as part of the photography festival "Les Rencontres de la photographie - Arles 2018" in Arles, France.

### 'Tired of romanticism'

Born on November 9, 1924 in Zurich, Switzerland, Frank grew up in a family of German Jewish industrialists, and became passionate about photography at the age of 12. He trained as a photo assistant in Zurich and Basel from 1940 to 1942. After World War II, he moved to the United States, pursuing fashion and reporting photography for magazines that included Fortune, Life, Look and Harper's Bazaar.

He grew "tired of romanticism," and, armed with his gut and a pair of Leicas, Frank began recording scenes of daily life. He developed a friendship with fellow photographer Walker Evans, whose Depression-era photos intrigued him. But Frank pursued themes including alienation, mass culture and veiled violence with a spontaneity that stood in sharp contrast to Evans' carefully crafted work.

A Guggenheim fellowship gave him the opportunity to visit 48 US states, and he brought back frames of a weary, hard and divided country. He also found beauty in the overlooked, photographing cars, diners and jukeboxes that went down in the iconography of American life. And yet, "he never crossed over into celebrity," said photographer Nan Goldin. "He's famous because he made a mark. He collected the world."

### Sick of goodbyes

As his reputation grew, Frank abruptly shifted into underground filmmaking, making several films, including "Pull My Daisy" (1959), based on Beat icon Neal Cassady, and a documentary about The Rolling Stones called "Cocksucker Blues" (1972). After learning of his death, the legendary English rockers he chronicled dubbed him a "visionary," saying in a statement that Frank "was an incredible artist whose unique style broke the mold."

Frank returned to photography after tragedy struck his family with the death of his daughter Andrea in a 1974 plane crash. He divorced his first wife and had two children. His son Pablo, who suffered from schizophrenia, killed himself in 1994. In the meantime, Frank's work had "shifted from being about what I saw to what I felt," he told The Guardian. "I didn't believe in the beauty of a photograph anymore." He began to create montages, write on his pictures and scratch the negatives.

Remarking on one of Frank's staged silver gelatin prints from 1978 — called "Sick of Goodbyes" for a phrase in it that is cursorily daubed on a mirror—the late rocker Lou Reed said "the photos speak of an acceptance of things as they are." "Robert Frank is a great democrat," Reed said. "We're all in these photos. Paint dripping from a mirror like blood." "I'm sick of goodbyes. And aren't we all, but it's nice to see it said." — AFP

## THAI HARDLINERS DEMAND 'ULTRAMAN' BUDDHA ART BE DESTROYED

Hardline Buddhists in Thailand called yesterday for the destruction of paintings depicting Buddha as Japanese superhero Ultraman, provoking fevered debate about using sacred imagery in art. The majority of Thais are Buddhist and a law on insulting religion carries a maximum sentence of seven years in jail even if prosecutions are rare. The student artwork went viral on social media last week after it was shown in an exhibition three hours outside Bangkok.

The artist, whose name has been withheld by her university over safety concerns, offered a tearful apology to monks for the four paintings, some of which had a backdrop with Louis Vuitton logos. But fringe group Buddhist Power of the Land filed a police complaint against her and four supporters for "hurting Buddha's feelings." "It's up to the court but we want (the paintings) to be destroyed," representative Jaroon Wannakasin told AFP yesterday.

During her apology the student said she meant to portray Buddha as a hero who protects the world like Ultraman, and that the Louis Vuitton logos represented worldly "temptations." As the scandal hit headlines and talk shows, a collector swooped in to buy one of the controversial works showing six Buddhas as the fictional character shooting lasers from their palms for 4,500 baht (around \$150). The artwork quickly soared in price during a bidding war on Facebook and Pakorn Porncheewangkul resold it yesterday for 600,000 baht (\$19,000).

"This picture brings controversy. I thought I should resell it and donate the money to benefit society," he told AFP, explaining that 90 percent of the proceeds will go to a local hospital. The remaining amount will go to the student in a gesture of support. "Otherwise no one will dare to create new art." — AFP



A picture shows a mechanical lion that has been recreated 500 years after its invention by Leonardo da Vinci, at the Italian Cultural Institute in Paris. — AFP

## Leonardo da Vinci's mechanical lion goes on display in Paris

Leonardo da Vinci's famous mechanical lion on Wednesday went on display in Paris for a month, in a tribute to the Renaissance master 500 years after his death. The lion, which is two meters (six feet, seven inches) high and three meters long and made of wood with a metal mechanism, is a reconstruction based on a rudimentary sketch left by da Vinci.

The original automaton, long since lost, was designed by da Vinci on a commission from Pope Leo X to amuse French king Francois I. Da Vinci, who died in May 1519, had a legendary obsession with the flight of birds and how understanding the mechanism could lead to the creation of a human flying machine. The lion is on display at the Italian Cultural Institute in Paris. — AFP



## Yahoo Japan to acquire online fashion firm Zozo

**Y**ahoo Japan said yesterday it will acquire a majority stake in the online fashion retailer Zozo founded by billionaire Yusaku Maezawa, known for buying pricey art and his space travel plans. The Japanese IT giant, a subsidiary of telecoms giant and investor SoftBank Group, aims to buy up to 152.95 million shares or a 50.1 percent stake in Zozo. The cost of the acquisition will be as high as 400.7 billion yen (\$3.7 billion), with Yahoo Japan offering a 21 percent premium over Zozo's Wednesday closing price. The deal includes an agreement to acquire 92.7 million shares from Maezawa, equivalent to the 30.37 percent he owns in Zozo.

Maezawa, known for his extravagant lifestyle and eccentric comments, will step down as Zozo chief executive from yesterday. "I will leave Zozo's future in the hands of a new president, and I'll move on to a new path," he said in a tweet, adding that he will expand on his future plans at a press conference yesterday. The move is part of Yahoo Japan's efforts to strengthen its e-commerce businesses. Maezawa is a former wannabe rock star whose personal fortune was this year valued around \$2 billion, making him Japan's 22nd richest person. He made international headlines by booking a ticket aboard a SpaceX rocket, as well as for his purchase in 2017 of a Jean-Michel Basquiat masterpiece for \$110.5 million. — AFP



Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, speaks as she launches the Smart Works capsule collection in London yesterday. — AFP photos

## UK's Duchess Meghan returns to work to launch new charity fashion range

**B**ritain's Duchess Meghan returned to work yesterday for the first time following the birth of her first child with husband Prince Harry to launch a new fashion range whose sales will help a charity supporting unemployed women. Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, has made a handful of public appearances since son Archie was born in May but the launch of the fashion collection, created in collaboration with well-known British stores and fashion designers, marks her first official engagement. The sale of the "Smart Set Capsule Collection" will last for at least two weeks and is designed to help Smart Works, a charity that provides quality clothes and training for unemployed women for job interviews.

For every item bought, one will be donated to the charity which Meghan became the patron of earlier this year. The items include a blazer and trousers from fashion chain Jigsaw; a tote bag from department store John Lewis; a classic dress from Marks & Spencer and a white shirt from fashion designer Misha Nonoo, a friend of the US-born Duchess. "Since moving to the UK, it has been deeply important to me to meet with communities and organizations on the ground doing meaningful work and to try to do whatever I can to help them amplify their impact," Meghan, 38, said in a statement. "Thank you to



Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, waves as she leaves after launching the Smart Works capsule collection in London.

the four brands who came together in supporting Smart Works on this special project - placing purpose over profit and community over competition." — Reuters



SoftBank Group Corp. chairman and CEO Masayoshi Son (left) and Yusaku Maezawa (right), the billionaire entrepreneur who founded the online fashion retailer Zozo, pose together during a press conference in Tokyo. — AFP

## Japanese man sues firm for 'paternity leave harassment'

**A** Japanese man who says he was penalized for taking paternity leave brought his case to a Tokyo court yesterday, a rare suit in a country struggling with one of the world's lowest birthrates. The 38-year-old, who has remained anonymous, is suing his employer, sportswear maker Asics for 4.4 million yen (\$41,000) in damages. He claims that after he took paternity leave, he was transferred to jobs that bore no relation to his skills or experience. By law, Japan offers comparatively generous parental leave—both parents can take up to a year off, with additional renewable six-month periods if a nursery place is unavailable.

But while more than 80 percent of women take parental leave, only six percent of fathers do. The disparity, activists say, is partly due to pressure from employers and a society that prizes long work hours. The plaintiff took a year's leave in 2015-2016 when his first child was born, and another year in 2018-2019 after the birth of his second child. He has accused Asics of effectively punishing him for his decision and doing so as a warning to other employees who might want to take time off.

Of the small number of men in Japan who take paternity leave, more than 70 percent are away for less than a fortnight. Fathers

face harsh criticism for taking leave, despite being legally entitled to do so as the government tries desperately to boost the birthrate, the man's lawyer Naoto Sasayama told AFP. "The culture established in a post-war Japan expects men to be the sole breadwinner. Stay-at-home men are considered extremely strange," he said. "That idea is no longer accepted but some people still can't understand it," he said. Parental leave is not paid for by employers, but government subsidies are available. — AFP





Clare Tattersall poses with some of her creations at the Robotic Dress Exhibition in New York. — AFP photos



Anina Trepte, founder and CEO of 360Fashion Network, poses in the Robotic Dress Exhibition.



In this file photo Sophia the Robot delivers a speech at the National Auditorium in the framework of the 'Mexico siglo XXI' (Mexico XXI Century) forum organized by the Telmex foundation, owned by Mexican tycoon Carlos Slim, in Mexico City.

# AT NY FASHION WEEK, ROBOTIC DRESSES TAKE ON A LIFE OF THEIR OWN



Fashion and technology have often gone hand in hand, improving supply chains and bringing the world's runways to the masses, but at this week's shows in New York, robotic designs took center stage. The dresses were conceived with the help of a kit designed by Anina Trepte, a former model and founder of the 360Fashion Network, who wants designers to integrate technology into their work even if they cannot code themselves. "I am on a mission to encourage other women to get into tech," Trepte told AFP. On Trepte's initiative, designers Clare Tattersall and Azrael Yang used the kits to conjure up six dresses unveiled in a Harlem church at a show organized by Melange, a movement promoting diversity in fashion and the art.

Tattersall, a Briton who lives in New York, created one dress with large futuristic flower petals that open and close mechanically on their own—the perfect eye-catching cocktail attire. A second dress has a large silver hood that goes up and down with the click of a button. The last is a fitting frock for the #MeToo era. It features bits of metal applied to one shoulder, and when hidden motion sensors detect someone who is too close, the metal rattles and shakes. Yang, who is based in Beijing, took her inspiration from the ocean and seaweed for her work, which gently undulate like waves, guided by sensors and environmental data. "A phenomenal result," Trepte said of the dresses.







‘Creative tool’

Trepte, a tall American-born German woman with red hair and big blue eyes, gave up the catwalks and moved to Beijing more than a decade ago to devote herself to fashion tech. “All the designs and the tech on these clothes were made by women—and the men did the sewing, ha ha ha!” she said. For Tattersall, the founder of New York-based fashion tech company ThunderLily, education is key. “My goal is to get girls involved in math and technology, show them that technology is a creative tool,” she told AFP.

Tattersall teaches girls of all ages about wearable technology, which she sees could be especially important in the future in terms of improving our health and fitness. The dresses were also shown at a separate exhibition in New York’s Union Square, along with some of Trepte’s own wearable tech-jewelry that lights up, wallets that charge cell phones and an “SOS” ring that sends a text and a GPS location to an emergency contact. Also on display were kits to make gloves with LED lights or coats with heating, and even a robot that can prepare cocktails and is activated by wearable tech hidden in the sleeves of a jacket.

A special guest

There was a special guest at both the Harlem show and the subsequent exhibition—the humanoid robot Sophia, made by Hanson Robotics. Her features and gestures are lifelike—right down to her eyelashes. The effect is unnerving. At the Melange show in Harlem, she gave a speech about diversity. On the catwalk: models of all shapes and sizes, races and sexual orientations.

Rag & Bone joined the robotic fun in a different way—for its big return to New York Fashion Week after a three-year absence, it deployed a giant robotic arm to film its catwalk show. The images were shown live to the public on giant LED screens. The robotic arm—which was connected to sensors capturing the models’ movements—was almost a character in the show, according to Aaron Duffy, who directed the robot for the show. It went from “kind of playful” to “pretty scary,” Duffy told Fast Company magazine. — AFP



Models walk the runway for rag & bone spring/summer 2020 during New York Fashion Week: The Shows at Skylight on Vesey in New York City.



# How to get your kids to love the outdoors

**B**aby's first smile, roll, words, and steps are milestones of child development. It's easy for parents to find expert advice on the best time for swim lessons, to pedal a trike, and ride a bike. But when should you expose your children to outdoor adventures? Erin Kirkland, journalist and founder of the Alaska family travel site AKontheGO, suggests starting where you are, literally and figuratively: 'The goal is success for the entire family,' she says 'and to get there, you'll need to begin at the beginning, with your youngest and/or most inexperienced family member.' While each child develops differently, we've come up with suggestions for the right age to take kids on various adventures.

## Newborns

If you're a parent who has enjoyed outdoor adventures before kids, there's no reason not to take your child along and introduce them to the outdoors right away. Remember, a newborn is still developing their immune system for the first few months, so parents should be careful in exposing babies to crowded public spaces, but that doesn't mean your child cannot go outside.

Ensure the baby is dressed appropriately for the weather (think Goldilocks - not too hot and not too cold), limit exposure to the sun, and use sunscreen once the baby is older than 6 months (younger than that use hats, clothing, and shade to block the sun).

It's also easier than you may think to go camping with infants. Before they start crawling, parents don't have to worry about babies getting into dangerous areas around the campsite (i.e., a fire). This is a great time to try some low-key overnight camping at a state park close to home in case you need to run back to the house for emergencies. But it's probably not the best idea to camp out in the dead of winter or heat of the summer.

## Infants (6 - 12 months)

Outdoor activities for infants include hiking, camping, and swim lessons. Of course, a 6-month-old isn't going to ramble down the trail, but 'hikes' with a stroller (regular or jogger) can be great exercise and self-care for Moms and Dads.

Between 6-12 months it gets more challenging to camp with a growing baby - they need to crawl around and move, and anything they pick up (sticks, mud, bugs) goes straight into their mouths. Parents need vigilance to ensure their child's safety. If you want to continue the camping experience at this age, perhaps stick to a tent in the basement or backyard.

Also, around 6 months of age is a great time to start introducing your little one to the water during swim lessons. Fear and separation anxiety start to develop around 8-9 months, so introducing the child to the water beforehand will make it easier to continue those lessons through this period.

## Toddlers (2 - 3 years old)

At 2-3 years old, toddlers do not have the strength or patience to complete a 3-mile hike, but they always enjoy spending time with their family outdoors. Plus, getting the chance to study insects, flowers, or a stream for minutes at a time is a sure winner. Toddlers love to be outdoors, and most will be thrilled to sleep under the stars.

For a toddler's first camping experience start with a simple overnight close to home. Get a good tent to protect everyone from wind, rain, and cold, and be sure to stick to your toddler's schedule. The first campout is probably not the time to keep





## Lifestyle | Feature

Friday, September 13, 2019

the kid active all day without a nap, and your campsite neighbors will also appreciate not hearing junior's meltdown.

For watersports, this is a great time for short canoe or kayak rides with your toddler in the center compartment of the boat. Don't stay too long on the water (20-30 minutes will suffice), and always have young children wear a properly fitted life jacket. At this age, remember, it's not the destination that matters, it's building a comfort level with the outdoors and an expectation for going on these adventures.

**Preschoolers (3 - 5 years old)**

After unrolling sleeping bags in the living room, setting up a tent in the backyard, and perhaps an overnight at a park close to home, your preschooler is now ready for a longer camping trip. If your child has some experience, head to a state park for a long weekend. Intentionally choose a destination with features of interest to children, perhaps a lakefront beach, waterfall, or gorge to explore.

Speaking of scrambling up gorges and rocks, 4-5 years old is a great age to start rock climbing. Preschoolers are usually old enough to use problem solving skills to get through a bouldering route, and most climbing gyms have a minimum age of 5 for children to start climbing walls.

On the water, a preschooler can move from the center of a canoe to sitting in the bow (a canoe offers more stability than a kayak for young children who can't sit still). Offer them a paddle, teach a basic forward canoe stroke, and get them involved. They may not last long or provide much propulsion, but your child will grow confidence in assisting with the adventure.

When planning outdoor adventures with children, Erin







Kirkland reminds parents to ditch the agenda. 'I find in my family-based classes and events that kids crave unscheduled, unscripted time in the outdoors,' she says. 'Find a location, create a base camp, and encourage free play. It might take kids a bit of time to figure out what that means, but once they start digging in the dirt, climbing trees, or wading in a pond, you'll be amazed.'

#### School-age (6 - 12 years old)

School-age children are developing and expressing their own interests. During their first five years, you've introduced them to different outdoor adventures and built a strong foundation. Now it's time to listen to your children's interests.

Think intentionally about what appeals to your child: if your child has demonstrated a keen interest in hiking and camping, perhaps it's time for a backpacking trip. Children who love their time in the water are certainly ready to paddle along with you in the bow of a kayak or canoe. Perhaps a canoe camping trip would be more their speed.

If they've enjoyed climbing activities like bouldering in a climbing gym, get that kid in a harness and up on a real rock or on a rope-based obstacle course. For your young explorer, guided cave tours are an absolute blast - just be on the lookout for signs of claustrophobia.

Or perhaps your child would prefer something more introspective. Going to interpre-

tive hiking trails with stations and activities or stopping to pick wild raspberries or search for crayfish are perfect outdoor adventures for some kids.

It's important to involve your children in the planning process to find an outdoor adventure where they are truly invested. Listen to your kids, give them choice and control over their activities, and you've done all you can do to set them up.

#### Teenagers (13 - 18 years old)

The teenage years might be known for attitude, eye rolls, and mood swings, but that doesn't mean outdoor adventures have to end.

Geocaching can pique this age group's enthusiasm for hiking. Erin Gifford, family travel writer and founder of Kidventurous, discovered geocaching during a family trip to Michigan. 'We spotted a family that was clearly hunting around for something,' she said. 'Looking under rocks, in trees, around park signs, all while staring into a phone, looking for answers. They let us know they were geocaching and that their boys loved it, that it got them interested in hiking. We downloaded the geocaching app on the spot and my kids were hooked, especially my 10- and 14-year-olds.'

On camping trips, give teens their own tent so they have the privacy they need, and with body image concerns top-of-mind, go easy on them when they want to bring extra







hair care products, acne scrub, and/or face wash. Similar to the school age years, after a foundation of outdoor adventures, parents should have a good sense of what appeals most to their child. Get teens involved in the planning process. Try for unique destinations such as camping in a covered wagon, a yurt, or glamping.

#### Outdoor adventures at any age

Preparing kids for a lifetime of outdoor adventures is not so different than preparing kids for an independent life. As a parent, keep your expectations realistic and be flexible - outdoor adventures with kids are certainly different than when you hiked and camped solo.

'Just go,' says travel writer and outdoor trade consultant Chez Chesak. 'Don't over think it. Don't worry if your child is the 'right age' or not because any age is the right age. Granted, you have to take more into consideration when taking a toddler out camping or on a hike versus a teen. But the key, really, is to just get them out there, into the wilderness.'

'Allow them (and you as a parent) to make mistakes, sometimes stumble, figure things out, and get back up again. That is how they will learn to be comfortable in the outdoors and ultimately fall in love with being outside.' — [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com)





# Shrimp Boil with Sausage and Spinach

## Ingredients:

1 lb small red-skinned new potatoes  
2 tbsp olive oil  
1 large onion, chopped  
Salt  
Pepper  
4 oz chicken sausage, sliced  
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
1 tsp ground coriander  
1/2 tsp ground mustard  
1/4 tsp cayenne  
3/4 lb large peeled and deveined shrimp  
1 cup corn kernels  
1 bunch spinach, thick stems discarded, leaves roughly chopped

## Directions

Place potatoes on plate and microwave on high 2 min. Turn and microwave until just tender, 1 to 2 minutes more. Cut in half. Meanwhile, heat oil in large nonstick skillet on medium. Add onion and 1/2 teaspoon each salt and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is tender, 4 to 6 minutes. Add potatoes and cook, stirring occasionally, until light golden brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Push to one side of pan.

Add chicken sausage to other side of pan and cook, stirring occasionally, until starting to brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Add garlic, coriander, mustard and cayenne and cook, tossing, 1 minute. Add shrimp, corn and spinach; cover and cook, shaking pan occasionally, until shrimp are opaque throughout, 2 to 3 minutes.



## Spaghetti with No-Cook Heirloom Tomato Sauce

## Ingredients:

1 lb. heirloom plum tomatoes  
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil  
Salt and black pepper  
12 oz whole wheat spaghetti  
2 cloves garlic, crushed  
3/4 tsp crushed red pepper  
1/4 cup roasted almonds, coarsely chopped  
1/4 cup chopped fresh basil  
2 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley  
1 oz ricotta salata, shaved with peeler

## Directions:

Finely chop 4 tomatoes; transfer to large bowl with olive oil and 1/4 teaspoon salt.

Cook spaghetti as label directs. Reserve 1/4 cup cooking water; drain pasta.

Meanwhile, chop remaining tomato. Place in food processor along with garlic, red pepper, 3 tablespoons almonds and 1/2 teaspoon salt; puree until smooth. Stir into bowl with tomatoes.

Add cooked spaghetti, basil and parsley; toss, adding some reserved pasta water if needed. Divide pasta among serving bowls. Top with cheese and remaining almonds.



Comic

Word Search

Electronics

Find and circle all of the Electronics related terms that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of a common electronic component.

ANALOGLTINNINGRNY  
REWOPCAPACITOREOT  
EIEDORTCELERDADRI  
CPTWGSAAHCTEAIMLTC  
NOTMINTARVINPOCI  
ASARORTCAORSDESER  
DIWDEHECAOTIERTLT  
ETEIOSUMTTNSOETEC  
PINDTUICRENTICILE  
MVEOMCUSGOAORANL  
IECTCDHATLFRCTYFE  
DPUUNITEUACSFIAHS  
ABIORILSSUNGNRLLT  
EGCHVRNIIMICAAALUD  
LIOECIETSDHDEERDX  
INDUCTANCESOCGATE  
EGATLOVETROTSISER

- AMPERE  
ANALOG  
ANODE  
CAPACITOR  
CATHODE  
CELLS  
CHIP  
CIRCUIT  
CONDUCTOR  
CONTACTS
- CURRENT  
DIGITAL  
DIODE  
ELECTRICITY  
ELECTRODE  
ELECTRON  
FARADS  
FLUX  
GATE  
IMPEDANCE
- INDUCTANCE  
INSULATORS  
LEAD  
NEGATIVE  
OHMS  
POSITIVE  
POWER  
RESISTANCE  
RESISTOR  
SILICON
- SOLDER  
SWITCHES  
THYRISTOR  
TINNING  
TRANSFORMER  
TRANSISTOR  
VACUUM TUBE  
VOLTAGE  
WATT  
WIRE

Yesterday's Solution

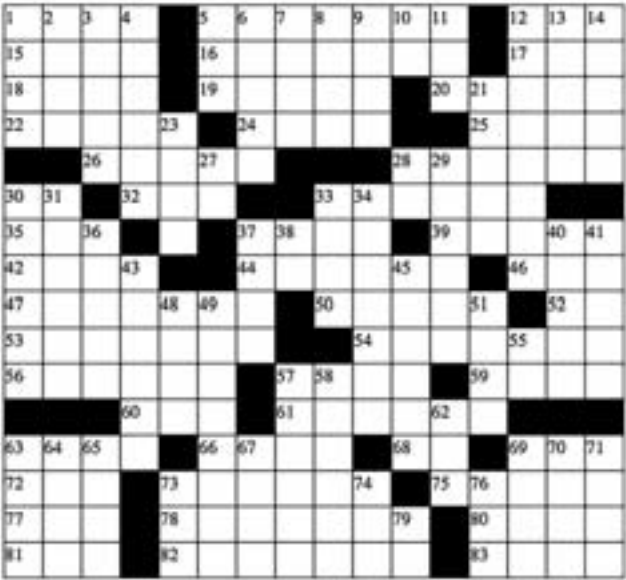
Easter

COSELPTICSTIDCHURCHY  
SRNESACRAMENTIESAAS  
GTUTHEFPBUNNYOUDER  
GTNCRORAKPMEMASSRINA  
EETITISLASUODEDEEYOOF  
LUNSERCTIRINTJAIIE  
PANDERATHWBIQUAFDTS  
YAVEOMAXTEENSLSASCT  
DELETRASINENGOMREI  
RYAMALITHOORRCIURV  
CASISSRNSINOIGLHRA  
ADTTHIAETEAROHYTUL  
LISCNICIPSTICECSASIS  
VLUTONDDETECWRYOEEG  
AOPRAAMOTSUCLECADRI  
RHPPNREEGGHUNINSRAV  
YTEETAMARYAURUTASPE  
EPHLLGGSCCELEBRATION

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

The hidden message is: ONE EASTER TRADITION IS TO DECORATE EGGS

Crossword 2306



ACROSS

1. Someone who works (or provides work-ers) during a strike.  
5. (British) A minicar used as a taxicab.  
12. (British) Sleep.  
15. Erect bushy hairy annual herb having trifoliate leaves and purple to pink flowers.  
16. A state in the southeastern United States on the Gulf of Mexico.  
17. The address of a web page on the world wide web.  
18. A deep prolonged loud noise.  
19. An extreme state of adversity.  
20. Hungarian wine made from Tokay grapes.  
22. (anatomy) Of or relating to the ilium.  
24. A covering to disguise or conceal the face.  
25. A network of intersecting blood vessels or intersecting nerves or intersecting lymph vessels.  
26. Jordan's port.  
30. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.  
32. A white linen liturgical vestment with sleeves.  
35. To make a mistake or be incorrect.  
39. Tropical American plants with basal rosettes of fibrous sword-shaped leaves and flowers in tall spikes.  
42. (used of especially horses) Having a brownish coat thickly sprinkled with white or gray.  
44. A tablet placed horizontally on top of the capital of a column as an aid in sup- porting the architrave.  
46. A unit of length equal to one thou- sandth of an inch.

47. In an extreme degree.  
50. Coming at a subsequent time or stage.  
52. A rare silvery (usually trivalent) metallic element.  
53. A member of an Indian people formerly living along the Gulf coast of Louisiana and Texas.  
54. An anticholinergic drug (trade name Daricon) used in treating peptic ulcers.  
56. Round flat seed of the lentil plant.  
59. One of a set of small pieces of stiff paper marked in various ways and used for playing games or for telling for- tunes.  
60. Leaf or strip from a leaf of the talipot palm used in India for writing paper.  
61. Having branches.  
63. The act of scanning.  
66. A mark left by the healing of injured tissue.  
68. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.  
72. Consisting of or made of wood of the oak tree.  
75. A coffee cake flavored with orange rind and raisins and almonds.  
77. A federal agency established to regu- late the release of new foods and health-related products.  
78. A tricycle (usually propelled by ped- alling).  
80. The capital and chief port of Qatar.  
81. Being one more than nine.  
82. A member of the Caddo people who formerly lived in the Dakotas west of the Missouri river.  
83. Made of fir or pine.

DOWN

1. An antidepressant drug that acts by blocking the reuptake of serotonin so that more serotonin is available to act on receptors in the brain.  
2. Neither warm or very cold.  
3. A genus of Platealea.  
4. United States writer of poems and plays about racial conflict (born in 1934).  
5. An adult male person (as opposed to a woman).  
6. Tropical American tree grown in south- ern United States having a whitish pink-tinged fruit.  
7. A quantity of no importance.  
8. Wading birds of warm regions having long slender down-curved bills.  
9. Disturb in mind or make uneasy or cause to be worried or alarmed.  
10. Before noon.  
11. Nocturnal mouselike mammal with forelimbs modified to form membra- nous wings and anatomical adaptations for echolocation by which they navi- gate.  
12. A famous waterfall in Venezuela.  
13. Feeling or showing extreme anger.  
14. Someone who plies a trade.  
21. Large long-armed ape of Borneo and Sumatra having arboreal habits.  
23. Young of domestic cattle.  
27. A small pellet fired from an air rifle or BB gun.  
28. Minor or subordinate.  
29. An implement used to erase something.  
31. English novelist.  
33. The granite-like rocks that form the outermost layer of the earth's crust.  
34. Covered with paving material.  
36. A switch made from the stems of the rattan palms.  
37. (Greek mythology) Goddess of the earth and mother of Cronus and the Ti- tans in ancient mythology.

38. 16 ounces.  
40. An exertion of force.  
41. Either of two large African antelopes of the genus Taurotragus having short spirally twisted horns in both sexes.  
43. The aggregate of actively swimming animals in a body of water ranging from microscopic organisms to whales.  
45. A resident of Utah.  
48. Horny plate covering and protecting part of the dorsal surface of the digits.  
49. A protective covering over or beside a wheel to protect the upper part of a vehicle from splashes of mud.  
51. Grains used as food either unpolished or more often polished.  
55. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.  
57. Relating to or characteristic of Arabs.  
58. A percussion instrument consisting of a pair of hollow pieces of wood or bone (usually held between the thumb and fingers) that are made to click together (as by Spanish dancers) in rhythm with the dance.  
62. The bill in a restaurant.  
64. (of a young animal) Abandoned by its mother and raised by hand.  
65. A Kwa language spoken in Ghana and the Ivory Coast.  
67. The basic unit of money in Ghana.  
69. A slender double-reed instrument.  
70. A Loloish language.  
71. An official language of the Republic of South Africa.  
73. A health resort near a spring or at the seaside.  
74. Any of various dark heavy viscid sub- stances obtained as a residue.  
76. A condition (mostly in boys) character- ized by behavioral and learning disor- ders.  
79. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.

Yesterday's Solution

MBARICOCHEETEBBS  
ABECOVERRIPEBAP  
RACEMEERREJIGNBE  
SURBASEWAGDAC  
ALISBACACHE  
NPICCRAKEOPEC  
BATSDOORATTILA  
CROFLUMBVICAR  
KANAF AHEADTA  
ADITIRADIOFIEF  
RECORDHCOAARE  
LEAATRACE  
FACEDTINKSTAND  
AGAAMOEBINABAB  
HAGMORRISONABM  
DRYPARNAIBAMUS

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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



TV Listings

**MOVIES ACTION**

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

**ANIMAL PLANET HD**

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

**BBC FIRST**

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

**crime & investigation network**

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

**COMEDY CENTRAL**

13:15 Live PD: Police Patrol  
13:45 Live PD: Police Patrol  
14:10 It Takes A Killer  
15:05 Homicide Hunter  
16:00 The First 48  
17:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill  
18:00 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence  
19:00 The First 48  
20:00 Homicide Hunter  
21:00 It Takes A Killer  
22:00 Broadmoor: A History Of The Criminally Insane  
23:00 Live PD: Police Patrol  
23:30 Live PD: Police Patrol

**COMEDY CENTRAL**

00:25 Roast Battle UK  
00:50 Impractical Jokers  
01:15 Tosh.0  
01:40 Friends  
02:03 Friends  
02:25 Broad City  
02:50 Comedy Central Presents  
Comedy 3alwagef  
03:20 Tosh.0  
03:45 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
04:15 Roast Battle UK  
04:40 Impractical Jokers  
05:00 Real Husbands Of Hollywood  
05:24 Real Husbands Of Hollywood  
07:00 Lip Sync Battle  
07:25 Lip Sync Battle  
07:50 Comedy Central Presents  
Comedy 3alwagef  
10:20 Friends  
12:20 Key And Peele  
14:25 Lip Sync Battle  
14:55 Lip Sync Battle  
15:20 Tattoo Disasters  
16:15 Tattoo Disasters  
17:10 Friends  
19:30 Martha And Snoop Potluck Dinner Party  
21:30 Comedy Central Presents: Menna W FINA  
22:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
22:30 Nick Swardson: Seriously, Who Farted?  
23:25 Broad City  
23:50 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah

**Discovery Family**

00:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
00:30 Bizarre Foods With Andrew Zimmern  
01:20 Must Love Cats  
02:10 My Cat From Hell  
03:00 Dirty Jobs  
03:50 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman  
04:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
05:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
05:30 Must Love Cats  
06:15 My Cat From Hell  
07:00 Dirty Jobs  
07:50 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman  
08:40 Weather Top Tens  
09:30 Secret Space Escapes  
10:20 Mighty Cruise Ships  
11:10 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
11:35 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
12:00 Xtreme Waterparks  
12:25 Xtreme Waterparks  
12:50 The Big Brain Theory  
13:40 Did I Mention Invention?  
14:05 Did I Mention Invention?  
14:30 Strange Evidence  
15:20 Breaking Magic  
15:45 Breaking Magic  
16:10 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
16:35 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
17:00 Must Love Cats  
17:50 My Cat From Hell  
18:40 Dirty Jobs  
19:30 Chopped Junior  
20:20 The Next Great Magician  
21:10 Penn & Teller Tell A Lie  
22:00 Tricks On The Streets  
22:25 Tricks On The Streets  
22:50 Keeping Up With The Kruger  
23:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things

**ID**

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

**Disney Channel**

00:00 Alex & Co.  
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles  
01:15 Evermoor Chronicles  
01:40 Alex & Co.  
02:05 Binny And The Ghost  
02:55 Evermoor Chronicles  
03:45 Alex & Co.  
04:35 Violetta  
05:25 Binny And The Ghost  
05:45 Rolling With The Ronks  
05:50 Rolling With The Ronks  
06:00 Shake It Up  
06:25 Coop And Cami Ask The World  
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts  
06:55 Sydney To The Max  
07:20 Penny On M.A.R.S  
07:45 K.C. Undercover  
08:10 Bizaardvark  
08:35 Jessie  
09:00 Jessie  
09:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
10:15 Bizaardvark  
10:40 Bizaardvark  
11:05 Liv And Maddie  
11:30 Liv And Maddie  
11:55 K.C. Undercover  
12:45 Bunk'd  
13:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
14:00 101 Dalmatian Street  
14:15 Shake It Up  
14:40 K.C. Undercover  
15:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
15:10 Fast Layne  
15:35 Penny On M.A.R.S  
16:00 Bug Juice: My Adventures At Camp  
16:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
16:50 Raven's Home  
17:15 Coop And Cami Ask The World  
17:40 Sydney To The Max  
18:05 K.C. Undercover  
18:30 Bunk'd  
18:55 Descendants Wicked World  
19:00 Raven's Home  
19:25 Liv And Maddie  
19:50 K.C. Undercover  
20:15 Disney Mickey Mouse  
20:20 A.N.T. Farm  
20:45 Bizaardvark  
21:10 Coop And Cami Ask The World  
21:35 Bug Juice: My Adventures At Camp  
22:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
22:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
22:50 Lolirock  
23:10 Evermoor Chronicles  
23:35 Binny And The Ghost

**Disney Junior**

00:00 Sofia The First S4  
00:25 Disney Junior Music Nursery Rhymes  
00:30 Gigantosaurus S1  
01:00 PJ Masks  
01:25 PJ Masks  
01:50 The Hive S2  
02:00 Zou  
02:15 Zou  
02:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster  
03:20 The Hive  
03:30 The Hive  
03:40 Zou  
04:25 The Hive  
04:35 The Hive  
04:45 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:10 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:35 The Hive  
05:45 PJ Masks  
06:30 Gigantosaurus S1  
06:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons S1  
07:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse Y2  
07:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2  
08:00 PJ Masks  
08:30 Vampirina  
09:00 Sofia The First S2  
09:30 Elena Of Avalor S2  
10:00 PJ Masks  
10:30 PJ Masks  
11:00 Vampirina S2  
11:30 Vampirina S2  
12:00 Gigantosaurus S1  
12:30 Gigantosaurus S1  
13:00 Puppy Dog Pals  
13:30 Puppy Dog Pals  
14:00 PJ Masks  
14:30 PJ Masks  
15:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
15:30 Vampirina  
16:00 Sofia The First S4  
16:30 Elena Of Avalor S2  
17:00 PJ Masks  
17:25 PJ Masks Music Videos S2  
17:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2  
18:00 Fancy Nancy S1  
18:30 Vampirina  
19:00 PJ Masks  
19:30 The Lion Guard  
20:00 Sofia The First S4  
20:25 PJ Masks Music Videos S2  
20:30 Doc McStuffins  
21:00 PJ Masks  
21:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers S2  
22:00 Fancy Nancy S1  
22:30 Vampirina  
23:00 PJ Masks  
23:30 The Lion Guard

**Discovery Channel**

00:15 Ultimate Survival  
01:05 Savage Builds  
01:50 Mythbusters  
02:35 Salvage Hunters: The Restorers  
03:20 Fast N' Loud  
04:05 Fast N' Loud  
04:50 How Do They Do It?  
05:15 How Do They Do It?  
05:35 Garage Gold  
06:00 Shed And Buried  
06:20 Garage Gold  
06:45 Ultimate Survival  
07:35 Deadliest Catch  
08:20 Gold Rush  
09:10 Alaska: The Last Frontier  
09:55 Salvage Hunters  
10:45 How Do They Do It?  
11:10 How Do They Do It?  
11:30 Fast N' Loud  
12:20 Fast N' Loud  
13:05 Shed And Buried  
13:30 Garage Gold  
13:55 Salvage Hunters  
14:40 Into Alaska  
15:30 Wildest Islands  
16:15 American Chopper  
17:05 Gold Rush  
18:40 How Do They Do It?  
19:05 How Do They Do It?  
19:25 Fast N' Loud  
20:15 Fast N' Loud  
21:00 Speed Is The New Black  
21:50 Shifting Gears With Aaron

**Kaufman**

22:40 Twin Turbos  
23:30 Deadliest Catch

**XFL**

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

**E! HD**

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

**H2 HD**

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

**HISTORY**

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

**NAT GEO people HD**

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



Stars



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You have plenty of good practical job-related thoughts and ideas. You have the ability to communicate with superiors and describe what you see. You work with real imagination and understanding in areas of the mind that are most private-depth psychology. Understanding your co-workers has an advantage this week, as someone may have been relieved from certain duties and another may have moved up in status. Politics and jealousy from others may gain your sympathy. Working with others at this time has brought you to realize that your ability to focus is an important factor in your business expertise. You may be sought after as just the person for a particular project. Laughter is contagious this evening-enjoy a good laugh with friends.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may be under a lot of pressure, at least in the way you appear to others. All is not in harmony between your emotions and the way you express yourself just now. Take a step back and reassess what motivates you. You are insightful when it comes to practical matters-job, career and such. You are independent and you may have an unconventional approach to work, especially regarding how you organize or manage your work. Perhaps the only problem today is that you may have a reputation for being different. You enjoy the emotional nourishment and a sense of security from ideals, friends and social involvement. There is a need for change, a desire to break away from the outmoded patterns. Find an enjoyment for the new and unique.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You do not like making speeches, but when elected to take the place of a scheduled speaker, you can plan each word perfectly. You are able to be a very forceful speaker when needed. Today, your words just gush out and you create an emotional impact that brings new information to your listeners. You have no trouble putting your feelings into words; in fact, you may have to exercise some control over your tongue, for you are quick. You may enjoy throwing in a word here and there that is new to the audience and keeps them alert and listening. Ideas, words, books, etc., are pursued with great gusto. This is a time when support and recognition should be in the forecast from public, family and friends. Slow the tempo tonight and enjoy a quiet evening.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Everything points to your taking a project over. You feel that you have support from those around you and your ideas will add to the smoothness of the execution of the project. There is a surge of independence, freedom and an interest in trying new ideas. If you are in sales, or teaching, others will not be able to resist paying attention to you. You are a smooth talker with a quick wit. This is a productive time. You are not afraid to try new things. This will broaden your thinking and help you see new styles, ideas and paths to successful outcomes. A little time management may be needed for most people, but you seem to naturally pull things together. A sense of humor this evening helps you to enjoy your surroundings.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Pay attention to your timing today so that you are able to make complete sentences and complete whatever tasks are placed before you. Communication, particularly with those you feel may be a bit pushy, could prove troublesome. When using written communications, it will be good to spell-check and proofread. You will be successful in whatever method of communication you choose. Create an interest in viewing the possible outcomes of a situation, instead of the quick fix-no surprises. You encourage others through your own actions. There could be change on the home front this evening. You appreciate tradition and regularity and you may be set against anything new. Of course, one could consider a good reupholstering job on a sturdy chair.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Your most essential quality has to do with the very real love and compassion you radiate. Your sense of value and sheer appreciation for life are communicated to all. You take control of a difficult situation today in some efforts to make others feel at ease. You could feel great support from those around you. You are also a born entertainer. There are special talents you are aware of and the energies today are with you in all of these areas. They are to enhance your problem-solving and strengthen your ability to help others. Perhaps you are in the medical field. You will succeed in your efforts; feel the confidence that belongs to you. Fill the air with music tonight.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You must learn to listen to some of your own more sensitive areas and feelings; they are clues into who you are and where your compassion can be found. Clear communication is ever important in order to get your information across. It is time to start thinking about opportunities that will show off your own special abilities. You may enjoy your job and be able to express your business expertise. This evening it will be time to show how well you can create what everyone wants. This may be with music, crafts or techniques, styles or expressions. You have held yourself back for much too long. You cannot abolish your creativity. Consider taking some time to volunteer in some mentoring and tutoring capacity, perhaps a community awareness project.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You have strong, stable emotions and tend to draw around you the perfect environment for yourself. The thing you need is always at hand. In addition, you get much support and good fortune from friends and relatives. You are sometimes pulled between a desire to progress and be all that you can be, versus a tendency to dwell in the past. Today may be full of dwelling in the past but you will eventually pay attention to the happenings around you. You can change a difficult matter in the office to an understandable occurrence. You will probably be the teacher today and you should be very pleased at the way the workday ends. Meeting with friends after work will afford you an opportunity to relax and enjoy the company of your peers.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

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



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

This is a great time to be with others and to work together. You enjoy working in a group that knows how to be part of a team and work together. You are very motivated, with a strong drive and urge to do and accomplish. In your own personal workspace you have an eye toward progress and the future; you feel compelled to try for what is just out of your reach. As a born coach or teacher, you are at home in the physical-action areas of life. You are quite able to manage a very active and strong emotional life. At home this afternoon a loved one gives you reason to be critical-you are wise to hold back your comments. Find the positive possibilities in this particular person. This person may just need to talk.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Your relentless pursuit of anything hidden makes you a good investigator. You are positive and energized, handling subject matters that others would never come near. You are able to size up a problem and come up with a solution. Using your mind to negotiate obstacles and handle dilemmas, you will be called upon to solve several business problems today. You could be a computer wizard or a technical adviser-whatever the case, others are glad you make yourself available. You have a natural ability to guide and lead others through the hassles of life. You could be very much in demand as a counselor-you enjoy solving problems. Be prepared-this could amount to a passion that others may not be ready to deal with-pace yourself.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your mind could be quite clear and natural. Ideas are streaming easily to you. You can talk, talk, talk. You could be on a planning committee or in advertising that calls for your kind of thinking. Your outward seriousness and no-nonsense approach to things are obvious to all. This deliberate sense of responsibility comes across and is central to your personality and the way you relate to other people. Everything is run through your checkpoint to see if it holds up and can pass the test. Although you are very creative, you can be a stickler with details. You may be able to enjoy and value the relationships you have with your friends and loved ones tonight. General good feeling and a sense of support and harmony make this a happy time.

Country Codes

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



# CLINIC PAGE



**Kuwait Times**  
248 33 199

Friday, September 13, 2019

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

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

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

**ACADEMIC CERTIFICATES:**

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

**SPECIALIZED IN:**

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

**SHARL, Ahmad Alkhar et., Building 16, Floor 11.**  
Tel: (+965) 22060777  
@DrFahadS, @DrFahadS, @DrFahadS  
Email: drfahad@beautybeyond.com.kw  
www.beautybeyond.com.kw

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

**Specialized in:**

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

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

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

**Specialized in:**

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

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

**Scope of Clinical Practice:**

- General & Laparoscopic Surgery
- Single Port Surgery
- Treatment of Colon - Rectal Diseases, including Colorectal Cancer
- Surgical treatment of Inflammatory Bowel Disease
- Treatment of Perianal Fistula & Complex Perianal Fistula (cryptoglandular)
- SWAT Procedure (Treatment of Fistula through Robot-assisted)
- Treatment of Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Colonoscopy & Gastroscopy
- Stomach Bullectomy (resection)
- Bariatric Surgery - Lap Sleeve Gastrectomy
- Gallstones & Abdominal Hernia Surgery
- Colonoscopy Hydrotherapy & Fecal Incontinence Treatment
- Laparoscopic mini incision
- Transanal minimally invasive surgery

**Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:**

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

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

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

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**GASTROENTEROLOGY**

Dr. Emad Al Hattar  
Consultant Gastroenterologist & Endoscopist

Dr. Ahmad Al Fadli  
Consultant - Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist

Dr. Ammar Al Kundi  
Consultant of Internal Medicine & Gastroenterology

Dr. Youssef Al Anadi  
Gastroenterology Specialist

Dr. Samah Ezzam  
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**Dr Sahar Ghannam**  
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Timing: Saturdays and Wednesdays from 10 am to 5 pm  
Sunday, Monday and Tuesday from 9:30 am to 5 pm  
Thursday from 9:30 am until 1 pm

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

**Academic Certificates – Training**

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

**Scope of clinical Practice.**

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

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Jabriya, 15th Ring Road, Block 1A Floor 15 - Crown Center Mazaya Building



# Classifieds

Friday, September 13, 2019

Kuwait Times  
Established 1961



## CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Adamsha Mohaideen Batcha**, S/o Adamsha, Indian National Passport No. J5551295, born on 14th June 1963, (Native District - Thanjavur), residing at No. 2003, Sri Ram Nagar, Thiruvaiyaru Taluk, Thanjavur - 613201, shall henceforth be known as **ADAMSHA MAIDEEN BATCHA**. (C 5671)

I, **GEORGE THOMAS KANNADICKAL**, AL holder of Indian Passport No. S9916023 having permanent address KANNADICKAL HOUSE, MAKKAPUZHA 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, **JOLLY PANACHAMOOTTIL ABRAHAM** holder of Indian Passport No. J1334887 having permanent address KANNADICKAL HOUSE, MAKKAPUZHA 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, **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

## Hospitals

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

## Clinics

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

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



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



DAY: Thursday

12/09/2019

Valid From 7 AM To 7 PM

## Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY DAY:** Hot with light to moderate freshening at times north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 45 km/h with a chance for rising dust over open areas.

**BY NIGHT:** Hot to relatively hot with light to moderate north westerly wind to light variable wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h .

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 12/09/2019 0000 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	43 °C	31 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	43 °C	25 °C		
ABDALY	42 °C	24 °C		
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C		
JAHRA	44 °C	28 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C		
SALMIYAH	39 °C	31 °C		
AHMADI	39 °C	32 °C		
NUWAISIB	42 °C	26 °C		
WAFRA	43 °C	24 °C		
SALMY	42 °C	26 °C		

## 4 DAYS FORECAST

DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Friday	09/13	Hot	43 °C	27 °C	VRB-NW	08 - 30 km/h
Saturday	09/14	Hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas	44 °C	28 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 26 km/h
Sunday	09/15	Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas and some high clouds will appear	44 °C	26 °C	SW-SE	12 - 30 km/h
Monday	09/16	Hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas and some scattered clouds will appear	45 °C	27 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 28 km/h

## PRAYER TIMES

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

All times are local time unless otherwise stated.

UP:0

## RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT

MAX. Temp.	43 °C
MIN. Temp.	27 °C
MAX. RH	32 %
MIN. RH	12 %
MAX. Wind	N 60 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2019

## Business

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ABU DHABI: Saudi Arabia's Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman (center), OPEC's Secretary General Mohammed Sanusi Barkindo (left) and Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak attend a Opec-JMMC meeting in the UAE capital Abu Dhabi yesterday. —AFP

# Oil producers pledge to respect output cuts

## Abdulaziz stresses urgency to restore stability to market as prices plunge

**ABU DHABI:** OPEC kingpin Saudi Arabia yesterday led calls for oil producers to comply with output cuts aimed at stabilizing a slumping oil market, as a gloomy new forecast blamed US-China trade tensions for depressed demand. Riyadh has been shouldering the burden of existing production cuts, but other nations—notably Nigeria and Iraq—are accused of exceeding their quotas.

"Every country should live up to its commitments," new Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman said as a committee of producers charged with monitoring the cuts and assessing the oil market opened talks. Prince Abdulaziz told the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC) meeting in Abu Dhabi that it was imperative to restore stability in the oil market where prices have slumped to below \$60 a barrel.

"He highlighted OPEC's operating paradigm of inclusiveness. He stressed that every country counts regardless of its size and that every country should live up to its commitments," the Saudi energy ministry said in a tweet.

Meanwhile, oil producers pledged yesterday to comply with output cuts aimed at re-

balancing the sagging market, but offered no further reductions in a sign they are short on options in a market depressed by US-China tensions. Prince Abdulaziz said the wider OPEC+ alliance which includes Russia is prepared to act to protect the market if sanctions-hit Iran, also a member of the group, returns to the market.

In a statement after the talks, the committee also emphasized compliance, saying that "equality, fairness and transparency" were essential. Dubbed OPEC+, the 24-member alliance of cartel and non-cartel producers decided last year to cut output by 1.2 million barrels per day (bpd) from January 2019, to boost prices after they fell by more than 40 percent.

The cuts were extended by nine months until the end of March but that move failed to invigorate the market. United Arab Emirates Energy Minister Suheil Al-Mazrouei said on Sunday that the group will do whatever necessary to stabilize the market, and that further production cuts could be considered.

However, he admitted the issue was not entirely in the hands of the world's top producers, with the market no longer governed by supply but being influenced more by US-

China trade tensions and geopolitical factors.

### Subdued outlook

There was no good news from the latest International Energy Agency (IEA) monthly report, which said growth in global demand for oil is expected to remain subdued. "International trade relations have further deteriorated in the past few weeks but US and Chinese officials announced that they would resume trade negotiations in early October," the Paris-based IEA said yesterday.

"Trade disputes and rising uncertainty about the impact of the UK's possible exit from the European Union are reducing global growth through lower business and consumer confidence, supply chain re-assessments, declining investment and direct reduction of trade." Against the uncertain backdrop, the IEA left its oil demand growth forecasts for 2019 and 2020, lowered in its previous monthly report, unchanged at 1.1 million barrels per day and 1.3 million bpd.

Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak said yesterday that the OPEC+ alliance has managed in the past to "adapt and react to the changing market conditions." Novak, whose country is the largest producer in the group,

said producers are determined to achieve stability in the oil market.

The JMMC does not take decisions but makes recommendations for action which will be considered by the full OPEC+ ministerial meeting in December. The Saudi energy ministry said on Twitter that Prince Abdulaziz's comment "underscores the key objective of the kingdom's oil policy, which is to achieve market stability & stresses the importance of maintaining a high degree of cohesiveness among OPEC and non-OPEC producers, led by Russia."

The prince was recently promoted to the pivotal role, replacing veteran official Khalid al-Falih as the top crude exporter accelerates preparations for the much-anticipated IPO of its energy giant Aramco.

A son of King Salman, and half-brother to de facto ruler Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, he is the first member of the royal family ever put in charge of the kingdom's all-important energy ministry.

In his debut at the Abu Dhabi industry talks this week, Prince Abdulaziz—a veteran of the industry with decades of experience—has emphasized that existing Saudi energy policy will not change. —AFP



## Business

# Fruit-sellers forgo comfort for cash on Hanoi's Red River

## Migrant workers on houseboats can earn up to \$8 a day

**HANOI:** Card games and karaoke help migrant workers pass the time on the cramped houseboats of Hanoi's Red River, swapping their privacy to eke out a living selling fruit for a few dollars a day. Temporary residents of these open-air boats have left the countryside in search of higher wages in the city. Life on a floating guesthouse can be tough. There is no electricity and no running water for the 40 US cents a night rent.

Everyone sleeps on thin mats, exposed to the elements inside the open-sided boats, while privacy is non-existent with mosquito nets the only partitions between cramped living quarters. But the migrant workers can earn up to \$8 a day selling bananas, mangoes, dragon fruit and lemons on the back of bikes or in the market stalls of Vietnam's bustling capital. That's four times what Nguyen Thi Hong earned at a rural garment factory. "I couldn't earn enough money to raise my kids," she said, explaining that her three children are back home with their father in Ba Vi, 60 kilometers (35 miles) from Hanoi.

**"So I moved here."**

Every year, more than 260,000 migrants stream into Hanoi and the southern megacity of

Ho Chi Minh City to study or work. Many take up temporary jobs in construction or as housekeepers, nannies and traders. Wages in Vietnam's cities are at least double those of the countryside in a nation where the World Bank says the average annual income is around \$2,600.

Migrant workers struggle to access "decent work and government services" and are vulnerable to sexual or labor abuse, said Nguyen Quoc Nam of the International Organization for Migration in Hanoi.

But for many of the workers living on the Red River, the flexibility and camaraderie that comes with selling fruit brings fragments of comfort. "It's a big home where we share our troubles with each other. If I'm in a pinch I can easily borrow money," said 54-year-old market seller Han Van Hoa, who's been coming to the boat for about 10 years with his wife. Like the rest of his temporary neighbors, he rises before dawn to buy his fruit wholesale before heading to a Hanoi market. While the city has transformed from a quiet communist backwater to a fast-growing commercial center, Han Van Hoa says people like him have remained rooted to the bottom of the social pyramid. "Hanoi has developed," he said. "But we haven't." — AFP



**HANOI:** This photograph shows Nguyen Thi Hang (left), a Vietnamese migrant worker living for the past seven years in a floating guesthouse on the banks of the Red River in Hanoi, singing karaoke along with other workers. — AFP

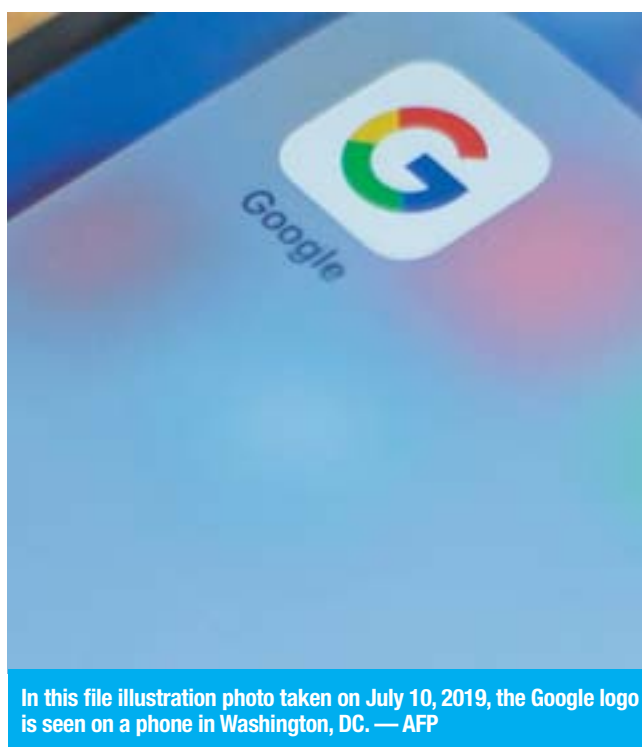
## Google to pay \$1bn in France to settle fiscal fraud probe

**PARIS:** Google agreed to pay close to 1 billion euros (\$1.10 billion) to French authorities to settle a fiscal fraud probe that began four years ago in a deal that may create a legal precedent for other large tech companies present in the country. French investigators have been seeking to establish whether Google, whose European headquarters are based in Dublin, failed to pay its dues to the state by avoiding to declare parts of its activities in the country.

The settlement comprises a fine of 500 million euros and additional taxes of 465 million euros, Google said in a statement. Google, part of Alphabet Inc, pays little tax in most European countries because it reports almost all sales in Ireland. This is possible thanks to a loophole in international tax law but it hinges on staff in Dublin concluding all sales contracts.

"(The agreement allows) to settle once for all these past disputes," said Antonin Levy, one of Google's lawyers, at a hearing in the Paris court. The combined tax payment is less than the 1.6 billion euros the finance ministry had been seeking from Google after the company's Paris offices were raided in 2016. At the time, the ministry had ruled out settling with the company. Budget Minister Gerald Darmanin told Le Figaro newspaper yesterday the settlement would create a legal precedent and added that talks were underway with several other companies, big and small. He did not specify their names.

European countries have struggled to tax the profits of



**In this file illustration photo taken on July 10, 2019, the Google logo is seen on a phone in Washington, DC. — AFP**

multinational tech companies derived in their jurisdictions. France has pushed hard for a digital tax to cover European Union member states, but ran up against resistance from Ireland, Denmark, Sweden and Finland. The French government has eventually imposed its own unilateral tax, prompting US President Donald Trump to brandish the menace of a retaliatory tax on French wine. "We remain convinced that a coordinated reform of the international tax system is the best way to provide a clear framework for companies operating worldwide," Google said. — Reuters

## Algeria looks into allowing foreign ownership in some sectors

**ALGIERS:** Algeria is looking into allowing majority foreign ownership in non-strategic sectors of its economy, the government said in a statement on state media late on Wednesday, without giving details. Algeria has prevented foreign investors from holding stakes of more than 49 percent, and large parts of the economy have remained under state control.

A government statement announcing the draft 2020 budget included the reform, but it must still go through more layers of approval before becoming law. It did not specify which sectors in the major energy producer are strategic, but economists say they could include oil and gas, electricity, transportation, water and telecoms.

Algeria has been looking into economic reforms in recent years as lower energy prices undermined its fiscal position. Oil and gas provide 94 percent of export earnings and 60 percent of a budget that doles out extensive benefits to citizens. However, mass protests since early this year, which led to the resignation of president Abdelaziz Bouteflika in April, have made movement on economic reforms harder.

The protests continue, though at a smaller level than in the spring, and the army is pushing demonstrators, who want a thorough purge of Bouteflika allies before any new election, to agree to a vote by the end of the year. — Reuters



## Business

Friday, September 13, 2019

# Merkel says can't shield car industry from 'revolutions'

## 'Automakers must develop new technologies and win back lost trust'

**FRANKFURT AM:** German Chancellor Angela Merkel vowed yesterday to support the vital car industry through "revolutions" in climate protection and digitalization, but warned firms must themselves develop new technologies and win back lost trust among the public.

"I believe it would be a mistake to think we could come up with state subsidy programs that will match the innovations of the coming 10 years" in reducing CO2 output, Merkel said as she opened the biennial IAA car show in Frankfurt. "You still never know quite how revolutions are going to turn out, and that's why we must organize them in as evolutionary a way as possible," she added.

The trade fair has opened under a cloud this year, under pressure from the lingering impact of Volkswagen's massive "dieselgate" pollution scandal, weaker international demand and a growing anti-car environmental movement. As Merkel addressed the fair, a small group of demonstrators outside urged "climate protection instead of SUVs!" on banners and placards, foreshadowing a larger protest scheduled for Saturday.

Even as it unveils a flurry of new electric models, the mighty German auto industry has been on the defensive in recent weeks and months over safety and the environment.

Critics say the sector is failing to reduce carbon emissions despite a massive push for new electric vehicles. Massive legal actions are still

pending over Volkswagen's admission in 2015 that it fooled regulatory tests on 11 million vehicles worldwide.

Meanwhile broadcaster SWR reported yesterday the giant may have built similar "defeat device" software into its newer motors.

### Politics and industry squeezed

VW did not respond immediately to AFP's request for comment, but the firm had earlier told SWR its EA 288 engines "contain no cycle recognition" to adjust performance under test conditions. "The question of illegal defeat devices still weighs (on the car industry), and has led fundamentally to a loss of trust in the middle of a period of gigantic change," Merkel warned. She has had to battle allegations of coziness with the auto industry since the dieselgate scandal broke, and has come especially under pressure as the ecologist Greens party snaps at her centre-right CDU's heels in the polls.

Ministers plan to present a new climate package on September 20. "Very fundamental decisions" are coming, Merkel said, repeating her Wednesday message to lawmakers that "putting a price on CO2 is the right way to make clear that all our innovation must aim at emitting less".

Carmakers already face pressure on their wallets from incoming EU regulations.

From next year, vehicles must on average emit no more than 95 grams of CO2 per kilometer on pain of a fine of 95 euros (\$105) for each gram



**FRANKFURT:** German Chancellor Angela Merkel stands with the CEO of German car maker Porsche Oliver Blume (left) and the President of the German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA) Bernhard Mattes as she visits the company's booth during her opening tour at the IAA Car Show in Frankfurt yesterday. — AFP

over the limit per car sold. That has prompted manufacturers to unveil a string of new "zero emission" electric vehicles, including Volkswagen's "ID.3" at the IAA. Industry expert Stefan Bratzel nevertheless warned that "the success of e-mobility as it ramps up in the market has a lot of pre-conditions, and cannot only be achieved

by manufacturers"-highlighting the role of governments. "Electric mobility will certainly be the alternative drive that we build out nationwide, along with charging infrastructure," Merkel assured IAA attendees, recalling also that Berlin is backing the creation of European battery manufacturers. —AFP

## Ifo institute cuts German 2019 GDP forecast

**BERLIN:** The Ifo institute yesterday cut its 2019 growth forecast for Germany and said a recession would hit Europe's largest economy in the third quarter, the latest gloomy forecast that raises pressure on the European Central Bank to loosen policy.

Ifo cut its growth forecast for this year to 0.5 percent from 0.6 percent. It also said the German economy would probably shrink by 0.1 percent in the third quarter, which would amount to a recession after a similar contraction in the April-June period.

"The outlook is weighed down by high uncertainties," said Ifo's Timo Wollmershaeuser, pointing to possible risks to the economy from a no-deal Brexit and an escalation of US President Donald Trump's trade wars. The German economy has weakened as its export-dependent manufacturing sector languishes in recession due to trade conflicts and uncertainty linked to Britain's planned departure from the European Union.

Ifo said the manufacturing sector's weakness is gradually spreading to other parts of the economy, including logistics and the services sector. This was leaving a mark on the labor market, it said. The institute expects a slight recovery in the fourth quarter. It said its forecasts were based on the assumption that there will be neither a no-deal Brexit nor an escalation Trump's trade conflicts, which suggests even weaker growth in Germany should either of those eventualities materialize.

For 2020, Ifo cut its growth forecast to 1.2 percent from 1.7 percent. Germany's Macroeconomic Policy Institute (IMK) earlier yesterday said there was an almost 60 percent chance that the German economy could fall into recession. The Kiel Institute for the World Economy (IfW) on Wednesday slashed its growth forecasts due to trade disputes and Brexit uncertainty. — AFP

## France will block development of Facebook Libra cryptocurrency

**PARIS:** France warned yesterday it will block development of Facebook's planned Libra cryptocurrency in Europe because it threatens the "monetary sovereignty" of governments.

"I want to be absolutely clear: in these conditions, we cannot authorize the development of Libra on European soil," Bruno Le Maire said at the opening of an OECD conference on virtual, cryptocurrencies.

Facebook unveiled in June its plans for Libra in an announcement greeted with concern by governments and critics of the social network behemoth whose reputation has been tarnished by its role in spreading fake information and extremist videos. Expected to launch in the first half of 2020, Libra is designed to be backed by a basket of currency assets to avoid the wild swings seen with bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies. Another major difference is that control over it would not be decentralized but entrusted to a Swiss-based non-profit association. Besides Facebook, backers of Libra include payment giants Visa, MasterCard and PayPal as well as ride-hailing apps Lyft and Uber.

French officials have been vocal in their warnings about the danger Libra poses since plans for the virtual currency were announced, and Le Maire kept up the pressure at the Thursday meeting. — AFP

## Slovak PM woos foreign automakers vowing state aid for e-cars

**TRNAVA, Slovakia:** Slovakia's prime minister on Wednesday promised incentives for foreign automakers who choose to produce electric cars in the country, which relies heavily on its large auto sector. Insisting that it was "crucial" for global carmakers operating in Slovakia to launch electric car production on its soil, Peter Pellegrini pledged "all available tools to support this production."

"These tools may include direct financial support for the purchase of technologies, or in combination with tax reliefs," the premier said. Pellegrini spoke to journalists as he tested the fully electric Peugeot 208 model made by French Groupe PSA Slovakia in Trnava, a town around 100 kilometres (62 miles) northeast of the capital Bratislava. The PSA Trnava plant, which employs 4,500 people, launched the mass production of its new e-208 model, an all-electric five-door hatchback, on Wednesday. Four global carmakers operate in Slovakia, the world's largest per capita car producer. The auto sector generates some 300,000 jobs, making it by far the largest employer in the eurozone country of 5.4 million.

Last year, more than a million combustion engine cars rolled off its assembly lines, while exports totalled 3.7 billion euros (\$4.3 billion). Overall, the car-making sector accounts for 44 percent of Slovakia's total industrial production and 35 percent of its exports. Experts expect the electric car sector to boom worldwide in the coming decade. Juraj Baksa, a Bratislava-based expert on electric vehicles and founder of the teslamagazin.sk e-car website, believes that to meet increasing demand and emission targets global car manufacturers will be inclined to use existing capacity at their Slovak plants to produce e-cars. — AFP



# US briefly overtakes Saudis as top oil exporter, says IEA

## Oil demand subdued on global economic uncertainty

**LONDON:** Global oil demand is weathering economic headwinds, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said yesterday, buoyed by lower prices brought on by abundant supply as the United States briefly dethroned Saudi Arabia as the world's top exporter.

"With oil prices currently about 20 percent lower than a year ago, there will be support for consumers," the IEA said in its monthly report. "Booming shale production has allowed the US to close in on, and briefly overtake, Saudi Arabia as the world's top oil exporter ... in June, after crude exports surged above 3 million barrels per day (bpd)."

The Paris-based agency maintained its estimate for growth in global oil demand during 2019 at 1.1 million bpd and 1.3 million bpd for next year, assuming no further breakdown in US-China trade talks and citing an easing of tensions around Iran.

Global oil demand growth is expected to remain subdued, with the economy weakening and buffeted by US-China trade tensions, IEA said. "International trade relations have further deteriorated in the past few weeks but US and Chinese officials announced that they would resume trade negotiations in early October," the Paris-based IEA said in its latest monthly report.

"Trade disputes and rising uncertainty about the impact of the UK's possible exit from the

European Union are reducing global growth through lower business and consumer confidence, supply chain re-assessments, declining investment and direct reduction of trade," added. Against this uncertain backdrop, the IEA left its oil demand growth forecasts for 2019 and 2020, lowered in its previous monthly report, unchanged at 1.1 million barrels per day and 1.3 mbd.

Demand growth in the first six months of this year came in at just 0.5 mbd and touched a low of 0.2 mbd in June, it noted. "For second half 2019, we assume no further deterioration in the economic climate and in trade disputes," it said.

A rebound in US production following Hurricane Dorian along with steep output growth from Brazil and the North Sea were set to drive production from outside the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) up sharply, it added. US crude exports spiked to more than 3 million bpd in June, as Saudi Arabia cut output sharply and Russia grappled with contamination in one of its main export pipelines.

Non-OPEC production growth is seen rising to 2.3 million bpd in 2020, up 400,000 from this year. Meanwhile, demand for OPEC crude is set to reach 28.3 million bpd in the first half of 2020, 1.4 million bpd less than the group produced in August. The discrepancy may prompt OPEC and



Increasing oil output, in particular by the United States, is putting pressure on OPEC and its allies to restrain production to keep prices stable. — AFP

its allies including Russia to revisit their production-curling pact.

"The implied market balance (will be) returning to a significant surplus and placing pressure on prices," the IEA said. "The challenge of market management remains a daunting one well into 2020."

Russia, Iraq and Nigeria in August produced

600,000 bpd more than their quotas in the supply pact, the IEA said, but Saudi Arabia cut by more than it had pledged, keeping the overall agreement intact. OPEC member Iran continued to suffer under US sanctions, with exports nearly halving month-on-month in August to just 200,000 bpd. A year earlier, they were at 2.1 million bpd. — Agencies

## France worried over UK preparations for Brexit trade controls

**OUISTREHAM, France:** France said Wednesday it was worried by Britain's preparations to cope with the reimposition of customs checks after leaving the European Union while emphasizing that French officials were ready to prevent potential bottlenecks at the border. Customs checks after Brexit, which is scheduled for October 31, risk sharply curtailing trade between the two neighbors, especially if Britain crashes out of the EU without a deal.

Speaking after a test run of new border checks at the Normandy port of Ouistreham, a main hub for trade with the UK, Budget Minister Gerald Darmanin said he remained "a bit worried about how the British are preparing." "You don't re-create a border that hasn't existed for several years... in just a few hours," said Darmanin, who oversees the French customs.

His comments came after the government of Prime Minister Boris Johnson published alarming documents warning of queues and disruption due to a lack of preparedness on the British side of the Channel. Documents released Wednesday said up to 85 percent of British lorries may not be ready for French customs checks in the event of no deal, reducing the "flow rate to 40-60 percent of current levels."

That could spark shortages of food and crucial medical supplies, the "Yellowhammer" report warned. Darmanin said French officials are prepared on their side, citing the hiring of 700 extra border agents and the deployment of a "smart border" system aimed to reduce customs formalities to a minimum after Britain leaves the EU. — AFP

## BAT stubs out 2,300 jobs, as vaping casts cloud

**LONDON:** British American Tobacco yesterday said it planned to cut 2,300 jobs globally by January as its new boss seeks to drive revenues in controversial e-cigarettes. "My goal is to oversee a step change in new category growth and significantly simplify our current ways of working and business processes, whilst delivering long-term sustainable returns for our shareholders," chief executive Jack Bowles said in a statement.

"This is a vital first move," added the BAT veteran, who became CEO in April. Bowles' announcement comes one day after US President Donald Trump's administration said it would soon ban flavored e-cigarette products to stem a rising tide of youth users following a spate of vaping-linked deaths. Companies such as BAT are lighting up strong revenue streams from e-cigarettes in the face of falling demand for traditional tobacco products, especially in Western markets, where high taxes, public smoking bans and health worries have persuaded consumers to turn to controversial alternatives. Bowles said the jobs cuts, of which more than 20 percent will be senior roles, would see BAT "better placed" to deliver £5.0 billion (\$6.2 billion, 5.6 billion euros) in new category revenues by 2024.

"A program of this significance involves decisions that will be difficult for our people, but ultimately it is the right thing for our business," said Bowles, whose company makes traditional cigarette brands Dunhill and Lucky Strike. BAT, which employs around 55,000 staff worldwide, did not specify which regions would suffer the job cuts that are equal to a little over four percent of its workforce.

Almost three years ago, BAT took control of US peer Reynolds American in a deal worth about \$50 billion in a move that specifi-



In this file photo, a man exhales smoke from an electronic cigarette in Washington, DC. — AFP

cally targeted the lucrative US market and the fast-growing e-cigarette sector. BAT yesterday said the latest restructuring would ensure the company "is better placed to meet ever-evolving consumer needs and deliver savings that can be reinvested in the growth of its portfolio of new categories such as vapor, tobacco heating products and oral tobacco".

### 'Run out of puff'

However Wednesday's US developments were seen as a major blow to the burgeoning vaping industry, worth \$10.2 billion globally in 2018, according to Grand View Research. E-cigarettes have been available in the US since 2006 and were widely considered a safer alternative to traditional smoking. But while e-cigarettes do not contain the estimated 7,000 chemical constituents present in traditional cigarettes, a number of substances have been identified as potentially harmful and the vapor could contain traces of metal, according to a 2018 study prepared for Congress. — AFP



## Business

# ECB governors unveil 'big-bang package' to lift Eurozone growth

## Central bank cuts rates, to bring inflation back to target

**FRANKFURT:** European Central Bank governors overcame divisions yesterday to agree a "big bang" package of monetary easing measures, aiming to support the eurozone economy through external shocks. A key interest rate deeper into negative territory, new net purchases of government and corporate debt and support to struggling banks were all agreed at the Frankfurt meeting, a spokeswoman said.

The moves mean president Mario Draghi, who will yield his seat to departing International Monetary Fund chairwoman Christine Lagarde on October 31, has set the tone for her first months — and possibly years — in office, although he will chair a final meeting next month.

"The final showdown has started with a big bang. The ECB just announced a big policy package to revive the Eurozone economy and to bring inflation back to target," said ING analyst Carsten Brzeski. Looking in more detail at the measures, the interest rate on banks' deposits with the ECB will drop to -0.5 percent, from -0.4 previously.

Negative rates mean lenders pay the central bank to park their cash in Frankfurt. Meanwhile the ECB left its two other headline rates unchanged, and said that all three would remain at present or lower levels "until it has seen the inflation outlook robustly converge" towards its just-below-two-percent target.

The "forward guidance" on rates abandons previous language naming mid-2020 as the ear-

liest possible date for a rate hike.

### New bond-buying

The biggest question ahead of yesterday was whether the central bank would restart "quantitative easing" (QE) net purchases of bonds, which amounted to 2.6 trillion euros (\$2.9 trillion) between 2015 and 2018.

Despite public opposition from governing council members like Germany's Jens Weidmann or Dutchman Klaas Knot, QE will resume from November 1, at a pace of 20 billion euros (\$22 billion) per month "for as long as necessary" to boost inflation. "The key point is that this commitment to more QE is open-ended," commented Andrew Kenningham of Capital Economics.

But governors stopped short of committing to the 600 billion euros of QE that Pictet Wealth Management strategist Frederik Ducroz said could prove necessary. On top of the rates and bond-buying moves, policymakers also agreed a "tiering" system to spare some of banks' deposits the harshest negative rates, after years of complaining from financial firms.

Uncushioned negative rates had so far cost eurozone lenders around 7 billion euros per year. Lastly, the ECB confirmed its latest round of "TLTRO" cheap loans to banks will go ahead from September 19, offering more favourable conditions to those who lend cash on to the real economy. While he cast the measures as

The governor planned to "stay at the bargaining table, to continue to negotiate," the report said. Uber has no plans to immediately reclassify drivers as employees in January, when the law takes effect. The law "does not provide drivers benefits; give them the right to organize, or classify them as employees," Uber chief legal officer Tony West said on a call with reporters.

Uber will press for a new classification that considers workers independent while guaranteeing benefits, and has allocated millions of dollars to get a referendum on the ballot to support an option that would let drivers remain independent while providing safety nets. "It was a leadership moment that was lost by California, to be able to lead that third way that fits the 21st century economy and the way the world works today," West said. West added that drivers would lose by being forced to work shifts, and not being able to "dual-app" by working for more than one rideshare service.

"Based on what drivers tell us, they are not changes that they would welcome," he said.

### Business model challenged

Lyft spokesman Adrian Durbin said in a statement after the vote that the state's political leadership "missed an important opportunity to support the overwhelming majority of rideshare drivers who want a thoughtful solution that balances flexibility with an earnings standard and benefits." Durbin added: "We are fully prepared to take this issue to the voters of California to preserve the freedom and access drivers and riders want and need." — AFP



**FRANKFURT AM:** In this file photo, Mario Draghi, President of the European Central Bank (ECB), speaks during a press conference following the meeting of the bank's Governing Council in Frankfurt am Main, western Germany. European Central Bank governors agreed yesterday to lower negative interest rates even further and resume their multi-billion-euro quantitative easing program. —AFP

"dovish" — or supportive — Kenningham said "it remains doubtful... that this will do much to reboot the eurozone economy, let alone achieve the near-two-percent inflation target".

### Washington watching

The September package aims to buttress the eurozone against the impact of trade wars, especially between the US and China, as well as weakening emerging markets and a looming no-deal Brexit. But the ECB's very attempts to shore up the economy could attract fresh trouble from Washington. "An ECB decision for further mon-

etary stimulus could be seen by the US president as anti-competitive behavior by the ECB," warned Nomura analyst Chiara Zangarelli ahead of the meeting.

"This could well mean a renewed focus by the Trump administration on auto tariffs." It will be up to Draghi to defend the governing council's measures at a 2:30 pm (1230 GMT) press conference. The Italian economist will also unveil the ECB staff's latest quarterly economic projections, likely slightly more pessimistic than those presented in June after months of weakening economic data. —AFP

## California law on rideshare drivers may hurt 'gig economy'

**WASHINGTON:** Labor activists Wednesday were celebrating California's move to have drivers treated as employees by rideshare firms even as it fueled concerns it will hurt digital platforms depending on the so-called "gig economy." A landmark bill was approved 29-11 late Tuesday in the state senate, with the assembly—which has already approved the measure—expected to send it to California Governor Gavin Newsom.

The legislation, which is being closely watched in other states, responds to critics who argue that companies like Uber and Lyft short-change drivers by denying them employee benefits. The law, if enacted, challenges the business model of the rideshare platforms and others which depend on workers taking on "gigs" as independent contractors. "This is a huge win for workers across the nation!" tweeted the California Labor Federation, which endorsed the bill known as AB 5.

"It's time to rebuild the middle class and ensure ALL workers have the basic protections they deserve." Newsom said however he was in talks with Lyft and Uber on a possible compromise, according to the Wall Street Journal.

## From Death Stranding to Olympic Mario at Tokyo Game Show

**MAKUHARI, Japan:** Gamers got a sneak peek yesterday at everything from the hyper-realistic, much anticipated Death Stranding to an Olympic-themed Mario edition at this year's Tokyo Game Show. The annual event for game enthusiasts is showcasing the diversity of the field, though Kojima Production's long-awaited Death Stranding for the PlayStation is expected to be among the biggest draws. It is a "totally new" type of game, according to creator Hideo Kojima, a towering figure in the industry who struck out on his own after years honing his talent at Konami with landmark titles like Metal Gear. "Kojima is always on the cutting edge," said Yasuyuki Yamaji, secretary general of the Computer Entertainment Supplier's Association that organizes the show.

Kojima himself presented the game to hundreds of journalists and industry insiders yesterday afternoon, hours after releasing a seven-minute trailer. "It's really a new kind of game and playing it is very complicated," he said. "I'm only going to show you the basics here, so you can understand a bit of the concept."

The game, which is scheduled to be released November 8 on PlayStation 4, is based around the

idea of reconnecting and bridging divides—overcoming the "strand" referred to in its title.

"Kojima has a massive fan base and it's the first time that he's explaining how the game is played," said Sony spokeswoman Natsumi Atarashi. Back in more familiar territory was the mustachioed face of Super Mario who makes an appearance in a joint Olympic-themed venture with Sonic the Hedgehog, in a release timed ahead of next year's Summer Games hosted in Tokyo.

And while esports won't be on the schedule at the 2020 Olympic Games, they are well-represented at the trade show this year, even though Japan is regarded as a relative latecomer to the field compared to other parts of Asia and the West. "Esports are less popular in Japan than elsewhere before the Japanese tend to play on their mobile devices rather than on computers, and most esports are based on computer games," explained Yamaji. "But we think that will change with 5G," he said. Nintendo, which will next week release a stripped down version of its popular Switch console—the Switch Lite—is not presenting at the show, but studios whose games are playable on the console were showcasing their offerings.

The PlayStation 4 and 157 games are also on show, though enthusiasts are already waiting eagerly for the next generation of the Sony console, currently in development. Plus there are a few treats for old-school fans, including a Taito stand offering full-scale arcade game terminals that will "soon be on sale in Japan" for PacMan, Space Invaders and other hits. The Tokyo Game Show runs over four days and attracts more than 260,000 people each year. —AFP



## Sports

# ‘A bit of a jolly’: How humble Hong Kong Sevens shaped world rugby

**HONG KONG:** As Japan gears up to host Asia's first Rugby World Cup, they might give a nod of thanks in the direction of continental neighbours Hong Kong for helping to make it all possible.

The Hong Kong Sevens has grown from an end-of-season bash to a globally acclaimed festival of rugby, inspiring the World Cup Sevens and World Sevens Series — and tens of thousands of fans, who don outrageous fancy dress and party till they drop in the stands.

Its 43-year history has been liberally sprinkled with legends such as Jonah Lomu, David Campese, Waisale Serevi and Zinzan Brooke.

The city holds the accolade of being the only two-time hosts of the Sevens World Cup (1997 and 2005), reward for Hong Kong's pivotal role in developing the oval-ball game across the world's most populous continent. The growth of sevens resulted in rugby's return to the Olympics in 2016 after a 92-year absence.

## ‘AN INNOVATIVE IDEA’

None of that was in the wildest dreams of a group of club enthusiasts when they devised the event, according to former Hong Kong Rugby Football Union president Brian Stevenson, who has been involved from the start and was treasurer for the inaugural staging in 1976.

“There had never been a thought about a kind of international sevens. I thought it was a very innovative idea,” says Stevenson, HKRFU president from 2001 to 2016, at the Hong Kong Jockey Club in Happy Valley, within kicking distance of where it all began.

Stevenson describes how a capacity 3,000 crowd packed Hong Kong Football Club to see New Zealand's Cantabrians win against sides from Indonesia, South Korea, Australia, Tonga, Japan, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Fiji.

“Nobody would have expected it to take off as it has. We've been most fortunate,” says the Scot. “I always felt it was the nature of Hong

Kong and its location. This is probably the most international city in Asia. And when the fans came in, this was all pretty good. “You think of the timing, 1976. Hong Kong was developing as a financial centre. Cathay Pacific was beginning to expand its wings. So there's a lot of things together that really made it.”

## ‘THAT'S NOT THE GAME’

The seed for the Hong Kong Sevens was sown when A.D.C. “Tokkie” Smith, then chairman of the Hong Kong RFU, attended the Scottish Rugby Union centenary sevens at Murrayfield in 1973. By 1975 he had plans for an international 15-a-side tournament, but they were met with resistance from the governing body of the then strictly amateur sport.

“They were not helpful at all,” says Stevenson. “So the way around it was an invitational sevens. I don't think any of us expected it to take off. Well, it was absolutely enormous.”

The success attracted the world's best players and eventually national teams, or at least some of them. “The most supportive people were definitely the southern hemisphere — Australia and New Zealand,” says Stevenson. “They came to the party quite soon. The (Pacific) islands — Tonga, Samoa, Fiji — were basically here from the word go. “But the countries up north, well, that was a different experience. “I remember visiting the Scots, and them saying, ‘Aye Brian, but that's not the game, the game is fifteens’. “‘OK Sir,’ I'd say. And I'd go back to little Hong Kong.”

## PROFESSIONAL EDGE

Stevenson believes the willingness of southern hemisphere players to embrace sevens gave them an edge when the game went professional in the 1990s.

“The big players, the forwards, the Zinzan Brookes, had become much more mobile than in

competitive spirit.” “He would be in the top five percent of competitive players,” Jones said during England's warm-up campaign.

“I have seen players like him - (former Australia scrumhalf) George Gregan was one - they train to get the best out of themselves and they are demanding of the people around them.

“They don't accept anything but the best of themselves and the best of the people around them.” Like Wilkinson, Farrell leads by example with his defence - though he has sailed close to the wind in recent seasons with some of his hits where the wrapping of arms came as something of an afterthought. That approach galvanises team mates and fans, though, and is one of the reasons why Jones made him captain - well aware that he was pretty much captain in all but name while Dylan Hartley had the armband.

It was not all plain sailing on the captaincy front either, as Farrell seemed unable to bring any influence to bear as England found themselves shipping points against Wales and Scotland in this year's Six Nations. He, and Jones, insist they have learned from the experience and, with memories of the home upsets by Wales and Australia that ended their 2015 tournament so painfully, they are going to need to



File photo shows Canada's Men's Sevens Team finished the 2018 Hong Kong leg of the HSBC World Series in Hong Kong as runners up.

the northern hemisphere. I thought it actually improved their game,” says Stevenson.

Eventually the north came to the party.

“We had sides from United Kingdom like the Barbarians, The Penguins, the Scottish Borders,” said Stevenson. “They key was they came with the best players like (Scotland's) Hastings brothers. “They were hugely supportive and they told their unions, ‘Come on, support these guys and go international’. That's how it developed.” Hong Kong now enjoys a three-day 40,000 sellout of colour, costume and top-class

sevens in April every year with plans to expand to a new, bigger stadium in 2023.

“It started as a bit of a jolly,” admits Stevenson. “But if you go back to the genesis of the whole thing, part of it was to develop rugby in Asia. “You always had a New Zealand against Sri Lanka and a 50-0 wipeout or something. But when you spoke to the Sri Lankans they were over the moon.

“They had played against Jonah Lomu. They had had that experience. That was what it was all about.” — AFP

## Captain, inspiration: Farrell key to England's hopes

**LONDON:** Southern hemisphere rugby fans used to delight in dismissing Jonny Wilkinson's flyhalf credentials but there was not a coach in world rugby who would not have picked him in his pomp and Owen Farrell is a man cast from the same mould. Other halfbacks may have a sharper pass, a better step, a yard more pace, but when it comes to the player you want pulling the strings in the heat of battle or lining up an injury-time penalty to win a test, Farrell is surely peerless.

The son of former dual-code international Andy, it is no surprise that Farrell junior has a razor-sharp rugby brain. He lives and breathes the sport and has the winning mentality and ice-cool nerves to go with it. Like every coach and team mate who has worked with Farrell, Eddie Jones, when recently asked to sum up what he brings to the party, highlighted his “massive



Owen Farrell

find a plan B at times in Japan.

## ENGLAND'S OPTIONS

It certainly looks as if they will arrive with options up their sleeve. For most of the last year Farrell has played at flyhalf, feeding a variety of centre partnerships, but against Ireland last month Jones reverted to his old “twin distributor” system of playing him at 12 with George Ford at flyhalf. The result was spectacular as

England's backline caught fire in a record eight-try 57-17 Twickenham victory.

Ford and Farrell, friends and rivals since they were young boys playing rugby league in Wigan, provided an exhilarating set of first-phase options. With outside centre Manu Tuilagi running lines to draw in defenders, Farrell's trademark, delayed cutback pass brought England's dangerous back three into space in an approach that cut Ireland's defence to shreds.

Whether Jones sticks with that system or goes back to Farrell at flyhalf might be a game-by-game decision in Japan but, whatever number is on his back, Farrell is guaranteed to be crucial to unlocking the tightest defences.

“He is the leader of this England team now and in my mind absolutely the key man if they are to win the World Cup,” said Clive Woodward, who added that Farrell's low-key, lead by example approach reminded him of England's only World Cup-winning captain, Martin Johnson. If England triumph in Japan, Farrell would be the first back to lift the Webb Ellis Cup since Australia's Nick Farr-Jones in 1991 and that would give him another one-up on his dad, who was on the losing side in the 2007 final against South Africa. — Reuters



## Sports

Friday, September 13, 2019

# Rookie of Year Im eyes breakthrough win as PGA Tour season begins

**WASHINGTON:** South Korea's Im Sung-jae will make a quick turnaround from his Rookie of the Year campaign when he tees it up at The Greenbrier in the first event of the US PGA Tour's 2019-20 season. The 21-year-old from Jeju learned Wednesday that he'd been voted Rookie of the Year after making 26 cuts in 35 starts. He posted seven top-10 finishes, including three top-fives, and was the only rookie to reach the Tour Championship.

"Being the first South Korean player, and even the first Asian player, to receive the award is pretty special," Im said Wednesday after his pro-am round at The Greenbrier.

"That's incredibly significant for me. This will give me a lot of confidence down the road." Im said playing a whopping 35 tournaments in his rookie season "wasn't my initial goal."

"In your first year, you just want to get your card for the next year — to survive, honestly."

Having done that in style he can set his sights on a first tour win, and The Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, could offer a good opportunity.

The tournament, which disappeared from the schedule last season before landing in its new spot on the calendar, launches a fall swing that includes 11 tournaments before December.

After five events in the United States, the tour heads to Asia for a three-tournament swing that features the new Zozo Championship in Japan that is set to feature 15-time major champion

Tiger Woods and newly minted PGA Tour Player of the Year Rory McIlroy among other top names. Until the game's top players start to swing into action, youngsters and veterans on the comeback trail have a chance to shine.

This week sees 2018 US Amateur champion Viktor Hovland of Norway make his debut as a tour member after posting some impressive rounds after turning pro in June.

The next few weeks also offer players like Im and US veteran Bubba Watson a chance to prove themselves worthy of a Presidents Cup captain's pick.

International team captain Ernie Els and US captain Woods will make their four selections to complete their 12-man teams on November 4 for the December 9-15 matchplay showdown at Royal Melbourne.

For world number 10 Bryson DeChambeau, the highest-ranked player in the field, the event is an opportunity to follow Woods's instructions to his President's Cup players to keep sharp in the buildup to the event.

DeChambeau said he planned to play four tournaments before the Presidents Cup and will be hoping for the same kind of early-season success he had last year when he won his first tournament of the campaign at TPC Summerlin last November.

A season after changes to the global golf rules sparked debate and some controversy, a few more changes are in store. The PGA Tour



Im Sung-jae

will begin random testing of players' drivers to ensure they conform to required specifications, something the tour hasn't done in the past.

The Tour said in August it was reviewing its pace-of-play policy after renewed complaints,

although a new policy has yet to be outlined.

Also new, the tour this season has reduced the number of players who will make the cut from the top 70 players and those tied to the top 65 and ties. — AFP

## Europe's Solheim Cup captain counting on home advantage to upset USA

**GLENEAGLES:** The USA have dominated the Solheim Cup, and will be aiming for a third successive victory when the 16th meeting with Europe starts today at the PGA Centenary Course at Gleneagles. But a number of arrows point in favour of Europe, and the home team captain Catriona Matthew is hoping to mastermind her own memorable three in a row.

This is the third time the biennial contest has been staged in Scotland, and Europe pulled off a massive shock at Dalnabreigh in 1992 and then won again at a very wet Loch Lomond in 2000.

"I think home advantage does play a big part," suggested Matthew, a Scot who has played in nine Solheims.

"A victory for Europe this week would go right to the top of my list of achievements. "It would even top my British Open win (in 2009). "I have always loved the Solheim Cup. It has always been my favourite week. As captain, I have been busier than I imagined — there is an awful lot to do — but I have thoroughly enjoyed the whole process." USA skipper Juli Inkster steered her side to victory in Germany in 2015 and again on home soil two years ago. But she has an inexperienced line-up and suffered a blow early in the week when former world number one Stacy Lewis — a two-time major winner — pulled out with a back injury.

Ally McDonald stepped in as reserve, but it means half of the visiting side are Solheim rookies. "Six rookies, but six great rookies," was how 59-year-old Inkster summed up the situation. "They may be new to this event, but they are all experienced players."

"I also think that when we are playing away from home there



**GLENEAGLES:** USA's Lexi Thompson (L) and USA's Brittany Altomare attend a press conference ahead of the start of The Solheim Cup golf tournament at the Gleneagles Hotel in Gleneagles, Scotland, yesterday. — AFP

can be advantages. There is not quite so much expectation, so the team can play a little looser. Ally has fitted in very well and Stacy will be staying around to help from the sidelines."

Europe has three rookies in the side attempting to reduce the overall deficit that currently stands 10-5 in favour of the USA.

But none is feistier than England's Bronte Law.

"Apparently, the USA are favourites, but I don't know where that comes from," said the 24-year-old. "I love matchplay and was in the winning Curtis Cup side at Nairn so have good memories of playing in Scotland." The form of the most experienced player from either team — Suzann Pettersen — will be firmly in focus.

The 38-year-old Norwegian has had many moments of controversy in her eight appearances.

She swore live on American TV on her debut in 2002 and was embroiled in a row over whether or not a putt was conceded to Alison Lee in 2015. Two years ago, she had to pull out with a back injury. A year after giving birth to a son, and with only a couple of playing appearances over the last 18 months, she was handed a shock wildcard by Matthew. — AFP

## Steeplechaser Chepkoech off to Doha with maiden win in Kenya

**NAIROBI:** World 3,000m steeplechase record holder Beatrice Chepkoech secured a berth at the world championships in Doha with her first ever victory in the event on home soil at the Kenyan trials yesterday.

The 28-year-old, who only made the transition to steeplechase three years ago, has won five Diamond League races this season and successfully defended her world best title in Zurich on August 29. Chepkoech clocked a modest 9:45:15 at the trials in Nairobi, ahead of 2015 world champion Hyvin Kiyeng (9:45:20) and Celliphine Chespol in 9:45:25.

The trio, who will try in Doha to wrest the world title from American defending champion Emma Coburn, crossed the line together in a show of unity.

But for Chepkoech, the victory held a personal significance — it was her first 3000m steeplechase win in her native Kenya since switching from road racing to the steeplechase in 2016. "It's given me a great feeling, winning my first race in Kenya," she said. At the last world championships in London in 2017, an inexperienced Chepkoech finished fourth, missing a medal.

But since then she has dominated the field. In July, at a Diamond League meet in California, Chepkoech finished well ahead of the chasing pack with 8min 55.58 sec — the fifth fastest time in history. — AFP



## Sports

# Root dropped twice as England make steady start in fifth Ashes Test

**LONDON:** Joe Root was dropped twice as England made a steady start on the opening day of the final Ashes Test at the Oval yesterday, reaching 86-1 at lunch.

Visiting captain Tim Paine asked the home side to bat, hoping his bowlers could take advantage of early overcast conditions in south London but will rue the two bad fumbles.

Joe Denly and Rory Burns had to dig deep to keep lively Australian pace pair Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood at bay in the testing opening overs. England had an early scare when Burns was given out lbw with the score on just seven but successfully reviewed the decision, with the ball tracker showing it was going over the stumps.

But Australia did not have to wait long for a breakthrough, with Cummins removing Denly in the ninth over to leave England 27-1.

The batsman pushed unnecessarily at a wide one and Steve Smith held on to complete a juggling catch at second slip.

That brought captain Root to the crease, with the England captain keen to make amends after an inconsistent series.

But the skipper had an astonishing let-off when, on 24, he top-edged a pull off Cummins

to deep fine leg, only for the recalled Peter Siddle to drop a straightforward catch, much to the delight of the nearby crowd.

In Cummins' next over Root again had a huge let-off when wicketkeeper Paine failed to cling on to a one-handed chance high to his right.

At the lunch break, Burns was 42 not out, with Root unbeaten on 28.

Australia won at Old Trafford last week to take a 2-1 lead in the five-match series, meaning they will retain the urn regardless of the result at the Oval. But Paine said his side were "very hungry" to complete the job and win their first Test series in England since 2001.

To stand any chance of levelling the series, World Cup winners England will have to find a way to solve the riddle of the immovable Steve Smith, who has scored 671 runs in just five innings at an astonishing average of more than 134. All-rounder Mitchell Marsh and seamer Siddle were brought in for the tourists, with batsman Travis Head and paceman Mitchell Starc missing out. For England, Ben Stokes is playing as a specialist batsman due to a shoulder injury. All-rounders Sam Curran and Chris Woakes replaced Jason Roy and Craig Overton. — AFP



**LONDON:** England's captain Joe Root looks at the stumps after losing his wicket for 57 runs during play on the first day of the fifth Ashes cricket Test match between England and Australia at The Oval in London yesterday. — AFP

## India pick uncapped Gill, axe Rahul for South Africa Test

**NEW DELHI:** Uncapped opener Shubman Gill was named yesterday in the Indian Test squad to face South Africa as the selectors axed out of form KL Rahul.

The 20-year-old has been rewarded for his prolific run-scoring in the India A team during the tour of the West Indies, where he became the youngest Indian to score a first-class double hundred. He may have to bide his time for a Test debut, though, as the omission of Rahul, who managed just 101 run in his four Test innings in the recently concluded West Indies tour, paves the way for Rohit Sharma to step up to open in the XI.

Chief selector MSK Prasad said he "wanted to give Rohit Sharma an opportunity to open the innings in Tests".

Sharma, who is the team's limited-overs vice-captain, has not been a Test regular and last played a five-day game in Australia last year. He has played 27 Tests in contrast to his 218 one-day appearances.

New batting hero Hanuma Vihari unsurprisingly remains part of the 15-man squad, led by Virat Kohli for the series starting October 2 in Visakhapatnam. Vihari, a middle-order batsman, scored a sparkling century and two fifties to top-score with 289 runs in the West Indies as India swept the two-match series.

The national selectors have once again chosen two wicket-keepers for the series with rising star Rishabh Pant having competition from Wriddhiman Saha.

Paceman Umesh Yadav has also been left out of the team. The three-Test series follows three T20 internationals which start in Dharamsala on Sunday.

**India's squad:** Virat Kohli (Captain), Mayank Agarwal, Rohit Sharma, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane (vice-captain), Hanuma Vihari, Rishabh Pant (wk), Wriddhiman Saha (wk), Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Shami, Jasprit Bumrah, Ishant Sharma, Shubman Gill. — AFP

## Bangladesh Test skipper dislikes Tests: Board chief

**DHAKA:** Bangladesh cricket chief Nazmul Hassan said Shakib Al Hasan will remain as Test captain despite disliking the format and expressing his reluctance to stay on following this week's embarrassing defeat to Afghanistan.

Nazmul admitted the all-rounder had shown little interest or enthusiasm for the five-day game — an attitude which would not have been helped by Monday's 224-run loss to Afghanistan in Chittagong. "We have noticed he did not have much interest in Test (cricket). You have seen that when we were touring foreign countries, he wanted to have a break during the Tests," Nazmul told reporters in Dhaka late Wednesday.

"Naturally he might have less interest. But we never heard that he has less interest in captaincy. If he is skipper, then he has

to play. If you are not skipper, then you can skip," he said.

Hassan's comments came after Shakib said he no longer wanted to lead the side in Tests following the chastening defeat to minnows Afghanistan, who were playing only their third five-day game.

Bangladesh became the first team to lose to 10 different Test sides with the defeat, which followed a lacklustre World Cup and 0-3 one-day whitewash by Sri Lanka in July.

Shakib, who shone at the World Cup with 606 runs and 11 wickets but was skipper for the Sri Lanka tour, said his performances might improve if he relinquished the captaincy.

"It will be best if I didn't have to lead," Shakib told reporters after the Afghanistan loss. "I personally believe it will be good for my game. 'And if I have to continue leading, then obviously there is a lot to discuss about (with the board),' he said.

Hassan said he spoke with Shakib on Tuesday after the Afghanistan loss, but that the player did not raise any concerns. "Our boys are emotional. I will speak with him when things get calm," he said.

Shakib will now lead Bangladesh in a tri-nation Twenty20 tournament involving Afghanistan and Zimbabwe starting in Dhaka on Friday. — AFP

## Taylor backs Smith to captain Australia again after ban expires

**SYDNEY:** Former skipper Mark Taylor yesterday backed Steve Smith to captain Australia again after his incredible Ashes exploits, as support mounts for the 30-year-old to be given a second chance. Smith was banned for 12 months over a brazen attempt to alter the ball with sandpaper under his captaincy in a Cape Town Test, and slapped with a further year's suspension from any leadership role which runs out at the end of March next year. While wicketkeeper Tim Paine assumed the job in Tests and won praise for the way he helped the side retain the Ashes at Old Trafford last weekend, he will be 35 in December.

Usman Khawaja and Travis Head have been touted as potential future leaders, but neither have performed in England while

Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood are bowlers, who rarely become captains. Taylor, who helped determine Smith's ball-tampering penalty, along with the bans handed to David Warner and Cameron Bancroft, said he was the natural choice to take over.

"I believe Smith will captain Australia again," he said in a column for the Sydney Morning Herald.

"I was on the Cricket Australia board that determined the penalties for Smith, David Warner and Cameron Bancroft over the events of Cape Town and have no doubt he will be a better leader next time around because of the very harsh lessons he learnt." Paine was widely criticised for his decision-making in the third Test at Headingley that Australia lost, but he bounced back admirably at Old Trafford and Taylor said he should retain the armband for the upcoming home summer series against Pakistan and New Zealand.

But Smith would be waiting in the wings. "To me it's not a matter of whether he (Smith) becomes captain again on April 1. It doesn't have to happen that quickly," he said. "But I'd like to think when Paine is finished as Test captain — whether that's in six months' time or two or three years — he would be a candidate to lead the side again." — AFP



## Sports

## Orioles' Villar hits record-setting homer

**BALTIMORE:** Jonathan Villar hit a tiebreaking three-run homer in the seventh inning to help the Baltimore Orioles to a 7-3 victory over the visiting Los Angeles Dodgers on Wednesday night. The 443-foot shot to left, off left-hander Caleb Ferguson (1-2), was the 6,106th in the majors this season, setting a new record. The old mark was established in 2017. The Dodgers clinched the National League West title with a win over the Orioles in the series opener on Tuesday, but Villar ruined any hopes Los Angeles had of a three-game sweep, breaking a 2-2 tie and putting the Orioles ahead for good. Baltimore ended a six-game losing streak and earned its 47th victory of the season, tying its 2018 total. Shawn Armstrong (1-1) got the win thanks to 1 2/3 innings of shutout relief on his 29th birthday.

**PADRES 4, CUBS 0**

Rookie Chris Paddack pitched six shutout innings, and Manuel Margot broke up a scoreless game with a solo homer an inning after robbing Nicholas Castellanos of a homer as San Diego beat visiting Chicago. David Bednar threw a perfect inning for the Padres, and Trey Wingenter pitched two perfect frames to complete a three-hit shutout. The second straight loss to San Diego dropped the Cubs into a tie with Milwaukee for the second National League wild-card position. After Margot's homer in the fifth, the Padres scored a run in the sixth thanks to an error on what had appeared to be a botched double steal. Wil Myers extended his hitting streak to 11 games with a two-run single in the seventh.

**NATIONALS 6, TWINS 2**

Ryan Zimmerman homered and drove in three runs, Stephen Strasburg posted his National League-leading 17th win, and Trea Turner also homered as Washington cruised past Minnesota in Minneapolis. Howie Kendrick went 3-for-4 with a double, an RBI and a run, and Zimmerman also had three hits for Washington, which won for just the second time in seven games. Strasburg (17-6), who broke a tie with Atlanta's Max Fried for most wins in the NL, gave up two runs on four hits over six innings. He walked two and struck out seven.

**BREWERS 7, MARLINS 5**

Mike Moustakas, replacing Christian Yelich in the batting order, homered twice and drove in five runs, leading Milwaukee over host Miami for its sixth straight win. Yelich, who was bidding for his second straight National League MVP award, was lost for the season on Tuesday when he went out with a fractured right kneecap. Moustakas took his spot in the No. 3 hole and blasted a go-ahead, three-run homer in the third inning. Then, after the Marlins tied the score at 5, Moustakas drilled a two-run homer in the top of the ninth.

**INDIANS 4, ANGELS 3**

Home runs by Carlos Santana and Francisco Lindor lifted Cleveland to an early lead, and the bullpen held off Los Angeles in Anaheim, Calif., to complete a three-game sweep. The blasts in the first two innings helped Cleveland grab a 4-0 lead. Indians starter Adam Plutko managed to go 4 1/3 innings before six relievers combined to limit the Angels to one hit over the final 4 2/3 innings. Carlos Carrasco (5-7) got the win after pitching 1 2/3 scoreless innings. In the ninth, Indians manager Terry Francona used three pitchers — each of whom recorded one out. Adam Cimber got his first save, finishing it off by striking out Albert Pujols on three pitches.



**BALTIMORE:** John Means #67 of the Baltimore Orioles pitches against the Los Angeles Dodgers at Oriole Park at Camden Yards in Baltimore, Maryland. — AFP

**RANGERS 10, RAYS 9**

Rougned Odor hit a three-run homer in the seventh inning to give Texas the lead for good in a win over Tampa Bay in Arlington, Texas. Nick Solak had two hits and two runs, and Elvis Andrus also had two hits for the Rangers, who have won five of six. Ji-Man Choi homered twice and drove in four runs, and Joey Wendle had two hits and two runs for the Rays, who had won six straight and 11 of 12. The Rays still own the top spot in the AL wild-card race, but the Oakland A's closed within a half-game and the Indians are a game back.

**A'S 5, ASTROS 3**

Matt Olson keyed a four-run, sixth-inning rally with a two-run double as Oakland handed Houston a second consecutive home loss. A's catcher Sean Murphy hit his fourth homer of the season, his third in the past two games. Marcus Semien also went deep and finished 3-for-5 with two runs. Brett Anderson (12-9) surrendered just two runs on seven hits while issuing three walks over five innings. Jesus Luzardo, the Athletics' top-ranked prospect, made his major league debut, allowing one run on one hit in three innings. Liam Hendriks got the save with a perfect ninth.

**METS 9, DIAMONDBACKS 0**

Todd Frazier and Jeff McNeil homered twice while Brandon Nimmo also connected as host New York beat Arizona. The Mets won their third straight and improved to 8-4 in their past 12 following a six-game losing streak from Aug. 23-29. The Diamondbacks absorbed their fourth straight loss following an 11-1 run. New York's Steven Matz (10-8) allowed four hits in six innings. He struck out seven, walked three and improved to 7-1 at home this season.

**BLUE JAYS 8, RED SOX 0**

Teoscar Hernandez homered as part of a six-run fifth inning, and Vladimir Guerrero Jr. had

three RBIs as Toronto crushed visiting Boston, which had only four runners reach base and managed just two hits. Hernandez and Randal Grichuk each drove in a pair as Toronto batted around in the fifth to send Boston to its fifth straight loss. Rowdy Tellez added a solo homer for the Blue Jays. Trent Thornton (5-9) earned the win after opener Wilmer Font pitched the first two innings for Toronto. In the first relief appearance of his career, Thornton struck out seven and walked one over five hitless innings.

**BRAVES 3, PHILLIES 1**

Dallas Keuchel threw six strong innings, Tyler Flowers hit a three-run homer, and visiting Atlanta defeated Philadelphia. Keuchel (8-5) allowed three hits and one run while striking out eight and walking three. Mark Melancon earned his 11th save despite giving up a pair of singles in the ninth inning. Phillies left fielder Corey Dickerson, who homered twice Tuesday, left the Wednesday game in the sixth after grounding out. Dickerson winced coming out of the batter's box and barely made it a few feet before leaving the game. The Braves lost their left fielder as well when Johan Camargo fouled a ball off his leg and was forced to leave the game in the fourth.

**ROYALS 8, WHITE SOX 6**

Jorge Soler had four hits, including his 42nd and 43rd home runs, as Kansas City defeated host Chicago. The Royals clubbed five home runs in the game. The first 19 runs of the series came via the home run. Glenn Sparkman (4-11) picked up the win, allowing three runs on four hits in five innings. Ian Kennedy recorded his 28th save in 32 chances. Reynaldo Lopez (9-13) gave up six runs on nine hits in 4 2/3 innings. He was victimized by four home runs.

**PIRATES 6, GIANTS 3**

Michael Feliz pitched out of a fifth-inning jam to preserve a one-run lead, and Elias Diaz

capped a two-RBI performance with a successful squeeze bunt, lifting visiting Pittsburgh past San Francisco. Jose Osuna scored three times and Felipe Vazquez recorded his second save in three days, helping the Pirates clinch the season series over the Giants with a fourth win in six meetings. The Pirates used RBI singles by Adam Frazier, Kevin Kramer and Colin Moran, and a sacrifice fly by Diaz, to build a 4-0 lead before holding on.

**ROCKIES 2, CARDINALS 1**

Ian Desmond homered, Antonio Senzatela got his first win since July 14, and Colorado beat St. Louis in Denver. Tony Wolters had two hits and an RBI to help the Rockies take the first two games of the three-game series by identical scores. Jairo Diaz pitched the ninth for his third save and second in as many nights. Dexter Fowler and Paul DeJong had two hits each for the Cardinals, who have lost two straight for the first time since dropping five in a row Aug. 3-7.

**MARINERS 5, REDS 3**

Rookie Kyle Lewis broke up a no-hit bid with a home run for the second consecutive night, leading host Seattle to a victory over Cincinnati. Lewis, who homered in his major league debut off the Reds' Trevor Bauer in the fifth inning Tuesday, hit a three-run shot with one out in the seventh Wednesday against Sonny Gray. Phillip Ervin homered for the Reds, who have lost four of their past five games. Mariners starter Marco Gonzales (15-11) went seven innings, giving up two runs on five hits. He walked two and struck out seven. Seattle's Anthony Bass recorded his fourth save of the season.

**YANKEES AT TIGERS (POSTPONED)**

The scheduled game between New York and host Detroit was rained, with the teams scheduled to make up the contest as part of a single-admission doubleheader Thursday afternoon. — Reuters



## Sports

# Still missing Messi, Barca challenged to 'make things click' against Valencia

**BARCELONA:** With Lionel Messi still injured, faltering La Liga champions Barcelona host Valencia tomorrow needing to prove they can produce big performances without their talisman. Messi has not played a minute of football this season due to a calf injury and without him Barca have made their worst start to a campaign since 2008, taking four points from three games.

While they thrashed Real Betis 5-2 in their previous home game, they stumbled to a 2-2 draw at promoted Osasuna in their last outing, failing to have a shot on goal in the first half in a performance coach Ernesto Valverde described as "awful".

Messi, who confirmed he will not be back to face Valencia and still does not know when he will return, urged his team mates to take a step up after their haphazard start.

"It has been a strange start because we have had a lot more injuries than normal," Messi told newspaper Sport.

"I'm not worried although we are all aware that we cannot afford to make a bad start like this and after the international break we need to make things click, strengthen as a team and start winning matches."

Messi's fellow forwards Ousmane Dembele

and Luis Suarez also remain injured ahead of the visit of Valencia, who Barca failed to beat in three games last season, including losing 2-1 to them in the Copa del Rey final.

Valencia are in a turmoil of their own, however, after coach Marcelino, who transformed them from fallen giants to fiercely competitive top-four contenders, was sacked due to a reported fall out with owner Peter Lim over transfer policy.

The inexperienced Albert Celades, the former coach of Spain's under-21 side, has been given the job amid widespread criticism.

"Marcelino fulfilled every objective he was hired for, sacking him is an outrage," said former Valencia goalkeeper Santiago Canizares.

"Celades has only coached youth players and has no credentials to work in the top flight. He has no idea what he has gotten himself in for and what the dressing room is like. He will have his work cut out from the start."

Elsewhere on Saturday, leaders Atletico Madrid visit Real Sociedad in the first game at the revamped Anoeta stadium looking to make it four wins out of four.

Real Madrid host Levante missing a total of nine players, with Luka Modric the latest to suffer an injury. —Reuters



SEVILLE: File photo taken on November 29, 2008 Barcelona's Samuel Eto'o (R) celebrates after scoring against Sevilla's with Lionel Andres Messi (L) during their Spanish league football match at Sanchez Pizjuan stadium in Seville. —AFP

## Late penalty lifts Rapids over Galaxy

**NEW YORK:** Nicolas Mezquida converted a penalty in the 85th minute to lift the Colorado Rapids to a wild 2-1 Major League Soccer victory over the Los Angeles Galaxy on Wednesday.

A furious finish at Dick's Sporting Goods Park in suburban Denver saw Rapids midfielder Cole Bassett break a 0-0 deadlock in the 79th minute, nodding in a header off Jack Price's cross. Three minutes later, Giancarlo Gonzalez soared to head in a corner and make it 1-1.

But the Rapids gained a chance from the spot for Mezquida after first-year forward Andre Shinyashiki was brought down in the box.

For most of the match, it was down to Galaxy goalkeeper David Bingham and his opposite number Clint Irwin, who combined for 16 saves.

There was controversy in second-half stoppage time, when Galaxy forward Cristian Pavon was shown a red card after trying to win the ball near the corner flag — a punishment reduced to a yellow card upon video review.

With the defeat, the Galaxy finished the night in eighth place in the Western Conference standings, one point behind FC Dallas for the seventh and final MLS Cup playoff spot.

A victory could have moved them as high as third in the crowded conference.

In the Eastern Conference, New York City FC and Toronto split the points with a 1-1 draw at Yankee Stadium, where both teams extended their unbeaten streaks to six games.

New York's Romanian forward Alexandru Mitrita rifled a free kick past the wall and into the top corner from 20 yards out to open the scoring in the sixth minute.

Toronto equalized in the 40th with a penalty from Alejandro Pozuelo after Sebastian Ibeagha pulled down Jozy Altidore in the box. —AFP

## Southgate fears further racist abuse in Bulgaria

**LONDON:** England manager Gareth Southgate fears his players could face more racial abuse in Bulgaria after an away supporter allegedly targeted Raheem Sterling when the teams met at Wembley last weekend.

The Football Association has said an individual was ejected from the national stadium for "discriminatory abuse" during Saturday's 4-0 Euro 2020 qualifying victory over Bulgaria.

Bulgarian supporters made monkey chants at England's black players when the side last visited Sofia in 2011, prompting UEFA to fine the Bulgarian Football Union 40,000 euros (\$44,000).

"It is a concern," Southgate, who plans to consult his players before the Oct. 14 encounter, told British media.

## Wenger says Man Utd not mature enough for title tilt

**LONDON:** Manchester United's current squad lacks the maturity required to mount a serious challenge for the Premier League title, although Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's players have potential, former Arsenal Manager Arsene Wenger said.

United have won the league 20 times but have not lifted the trophy since Alex Ferguson's final season in 2012-13, and Wenger suggested the club have a long way to go before attempting to reach the heights they did under his great rival.

"We're aware that there is history there and we want to make sure that we're all prepared for what might happen and how we want to respond.

"We didn't think it was right to do it this month because it's too far away from the games, but we have to hope. We're not confident that we'll go there and nothing will happen."

UEFA has ordered the Bulgarian Football Union to partially close the Vasil Levski national stadium for England's visit after supporters were found guilty of racist behaviour in matches earlier this year.

Southgate also expressed concern over the behaviour of England fans on upcoming trips to Czech Republic and Bulgaria, after violence involving some supporters overshadowed the recent Nations League finals in Portugal.

"I'm afraid that it is a societal issue of people with alcohol unable to control themselves," he said. "But we certainly don't want to be taking that abroad and that being a representation of our country." —Reuters



Gareth Southgate

fore attempting to reach the heights they did under his great rival.

"When you see United, they are one of the examples where there's a potential. But they have not found a collective way," Wenger, who is reportedly <https://nyti.ms/2kFS37y> set to join FIFA in a technical role, told Qatar-based broadcaster beIN Sports.

"Maybe these players are not mature enough to carry the team play of a team like United, altogether. That's the question mark now. You feel there is something coming out but it's not ready.

"When you watch them play, they are not a candidate to fight for the championship. Will they emulate what Giggs, Scholes and Beckham did over a number of years? I'm not con-

vinced." Former striker Andy Cole said supporters must be patient as United, who were sixth last season, work on plugging the gap to champions Manchester City and Liverpool.

"I believe we're still a few years away," Cole, who won five league titles and the 1999 Champions League during six years at Old Trafford, told Sky Sports.

"We've got to ... keep bringing in better players and try and improve season by season, because the two teams at the top - Liverpool and City - they're pulling away from everyone.

"I was in a team at United where we were doing exactly the same thing and in the end, everyone else closed the gap." United face Leicester in the league tomorrow. —Reuters



## Sports

Friday, September 13, 2019

# ‘No regrets’ but US suffer second loss in as many days at World Cup

**DONGGUAN:** Deposed champions the United States lost 94-89 to Serbia in a dead-rubber at the Basketball World Cup yesterday, a day after surrendering their 13-year unbeaten run.

A young Team USA made up of second-tier NBA stars were defeated 89-79 in the quarter-finals by France on Wednesday, bringing a premature close to their World Cup defence. More significantly, it was the reigning world and Olympic champions' first defeat in a major competition since the semi-finals of the 2006 World Cup. Yesterday's "classification" game in Dongguan was the final that never was: the holders against the favourites. The US were down a scarcely believable 32-7 after the first quarter and headed for a big defeat, before clawing back some of the deficit and a degree of pride.

Harrison Barnes of the Sacramento Kings, the only remaining member of the triumphant 2016 Rio Olympic roster, said: "There are no regrets from our group in terms of what we've given, what we've sacrificed."

"The commitment everyone has made away from their families, their teams, their organisations." There was no medal up for grabs and the US have already qualified for next summer's Tokyo Games. But there was added spice after Serbia's coach said prior to the World Cup that if the Americans met his team, "May god help them". Sasha Djordjevic dismissed the comment as motivational irony but said that he could see

the US were still shell-shocked from the France defeat in the first quarter.

Gregg Popovich's team failed to score a point during one barren five-minute period. A rout was on the cards for Serbia, whose tournament also came to a surprise quarter-final end, at the hands of Argentina.

The 70-year-old Popovich chewed his lip and brooded. But the US fought back in the second quarter and reduced the gap to just four points at half-time. Going into the fourth quarter, Serbia — led once more by the Sacramento Kings' Bogdan Bogdanovic — were only three points ahead. But the US comeback fell narrowly short and they have another classification match on Saturday to decide who finishes seventh and eighth. Bogdanovic, who has been one of the players of the tournament in China, led all scoring with 28 points.

Barnes had 22 points and said that the Americans would give it their all in their tournament closer, when they will face the loser of the Czech Republic versus Poland.

"Tomorrow we have that opportunity to go out once again, play a game, represent our country," he said. "For some of us — potentially all of us — it could be our last time we wear a USA jersey, or the beginning of many."

"We will just savour that opportunity." In Friday's semi-finals, Spain play Australia and France take on Argentina. — AFP



**DONGGUAN:** Harrison Barnes #8 of USA goes to the basket against Serbia during the 2019 FIBA World Cup yesterday at the Dongguan Basketball Center in Dongguan, China. — AFP

## Spurs disappointed by timing of Lo Celso injury: Pochettino

**LONDON:** Giovani Lo Celso's injury on international duty was a huge blow to both Tottenham Hotspur and the Argentine midfielder as he was just starting to adapt to his new surroundings in the Premier League, manager Mauricio Pochettino said yesterday. Lo Celso, signed on loan by Spurs on transfer deadline day from Spanish side Real Betis, suffered a hip injury during Argentina's 0-0 draw with Chile last week and the club confirmed on Tuesday that he would be sidelined until the end of October.

"It's a sad situation. I'm very disappointed because Giovani had the first month to adapt to the club. Everything was going in a good way," Pochettino told reporters ahead of Saturday's home game against Crystal Palace.

"Now we have to wait for him... Nothing is going to change the reality. We are all disappointed, the national team are sad too. We cannot change the situation and that is why it is so important to anticipate these things."


The 23-year-old was Spurs' third close-season recruit to be sidelined with injury after midfielder Tanguy Ndombele missed the last two games with a thigh problem while Ryan Sessegnon is yet to make his club debut due to a hamstring issue.

"We need to assess (Sessegnon) tomorrow. The same with Tanguy Ndombele and Kyle Walker-Peters (hamstring)," Pochettino added. "We've got seven games in 21 days. It's going to be tough and we need everyone at their best."

Spurs midfielder Christian Eriksen was heavily linked with a move away from the club in the close season but eventually stayed put and Pochettino said it was important to put the transfer rumours behind them and focus on the months ahead. "He (Eriksen) has always been happy here," Pochettino said. "Everyone has their aims and challenges but I told you before the Arsenal game that he was in the right mind, that's why I selected him. — Reuters



**LOS ANGELES:** File photo shows Giovani Lo Celso of Argentina (C) vies for the ball with Oscar Opazo of Chile during their international friendly football match between Argentina and Chile at the LA Memorial Coliseum in Los Angeles, California. — AFP

	MATCHES ON TV	
	LOCAL TIMING	
SPANISH LEAGUE		
Real Mallorca v Athletic de Bilbao		22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 3		
GERMAN BUNDESLIGA		
Fortuna Dusseldorf v VfL Wolfsburg		21:30
beIN SPORTS HD 5		
FRENCH LEAGUE		
LOSC Lille v SCO Angers		20:00
beIN SPORTS HD 4		
Amiens SC v Olympique Lyonnais		21:45
beIN SPORTS HD 6		

## UEFA report shows record spending in summer transfer window

**LAUSANNE:** A new report from UEFA, published yesterday, showed record spending in Europe during the recently closed summer transfer window with the majority of all money spent on transfers coming from clubs involved in either the Champions League or Europa League group stage. For the whole of Europe, transfer spending was 29 percent up on last summer and 19 percent higher than the previous record 2017 summer.

The 80 clubs involved in the group stages of this year's Champions League and Europa League accounted for 58 percent of all money spent globally on transfer fees.

The 32 clubs in the Champions League and 48 in the Europa League spent a combined 3.98 billion euros (\$4.39 billion), an increase of 55 percent from the summer window of 2018. Forty-three percent of the clubs broke their record transfer signing.

The study does not include commissions paid to agents. The 80 clubs, who also received 3.72 billion euros in fees paid, reported combined revenues of 11.7 billion euros and profits of 193 million euros in their most recent reporting.

Forwards and defenders were the most transferred players this summer, combining equally for 70 percent of all transfers, while clubs showed a marked preference for youth.

Players aged between 21 and 24 accounted for almost half of all summer transfers at 47 percent while only seven percent were of players aged over 28. A FIFA report, also published on Thursday, showed that 75.7 percent of the global spending on transfer fees came from clubs in England, Spain, France, Germany and Italy. — AFP



# Sport Times

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2019



DONGGUAN: Bogdan Bogdanovic of Serbia (C) is defended by Joe Harris of the US (R) during the Basketball World Cup classification game between the USA and Serbia in Dongguan yesterday. —AFP

## US suffer second loss in as many days at WCup

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